

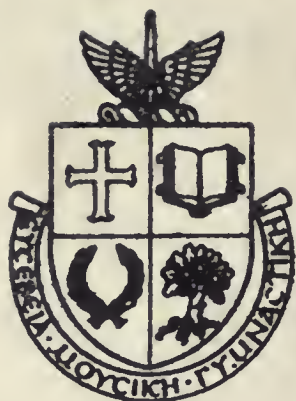
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THE INGOLDSBY LEGENDS

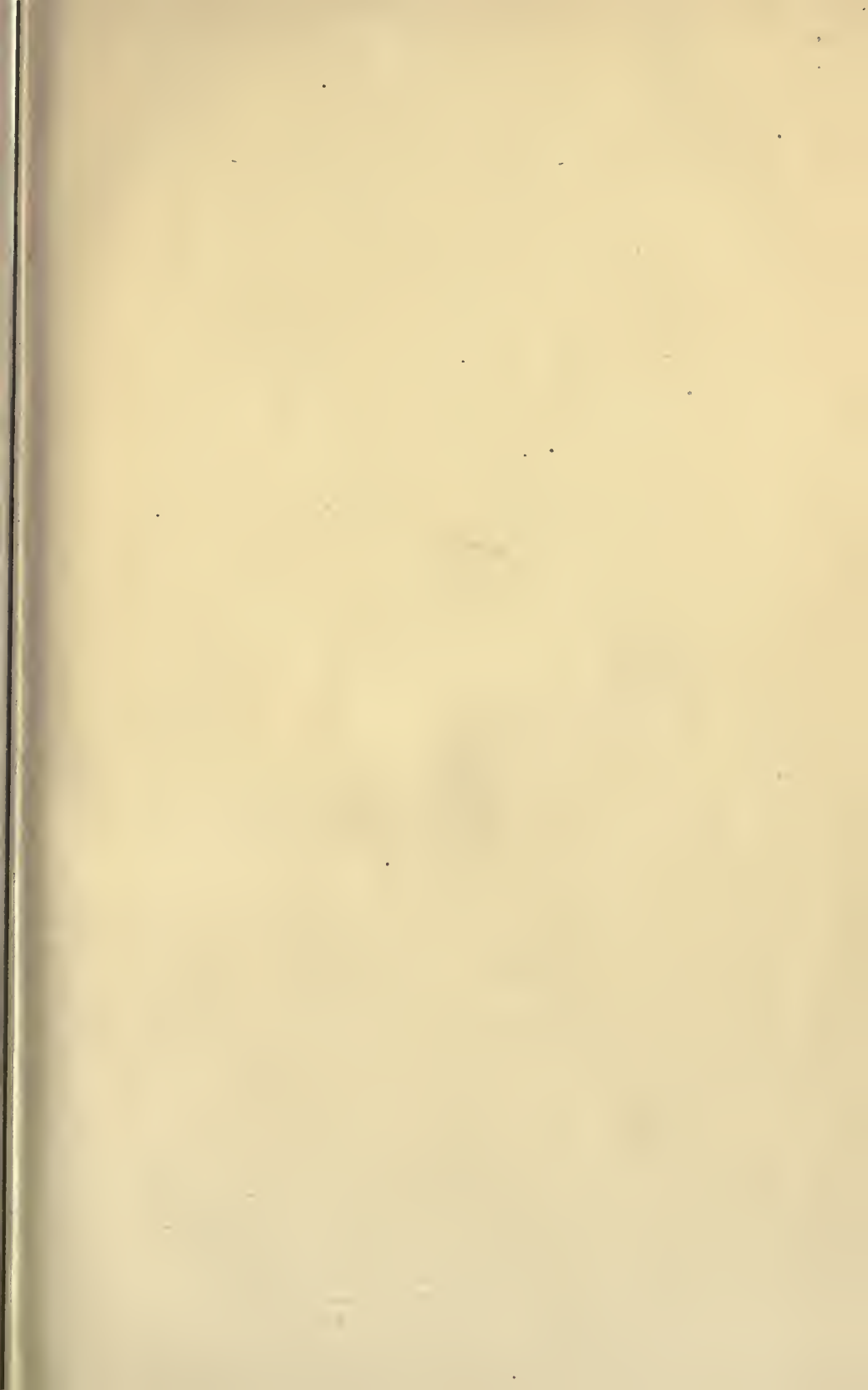


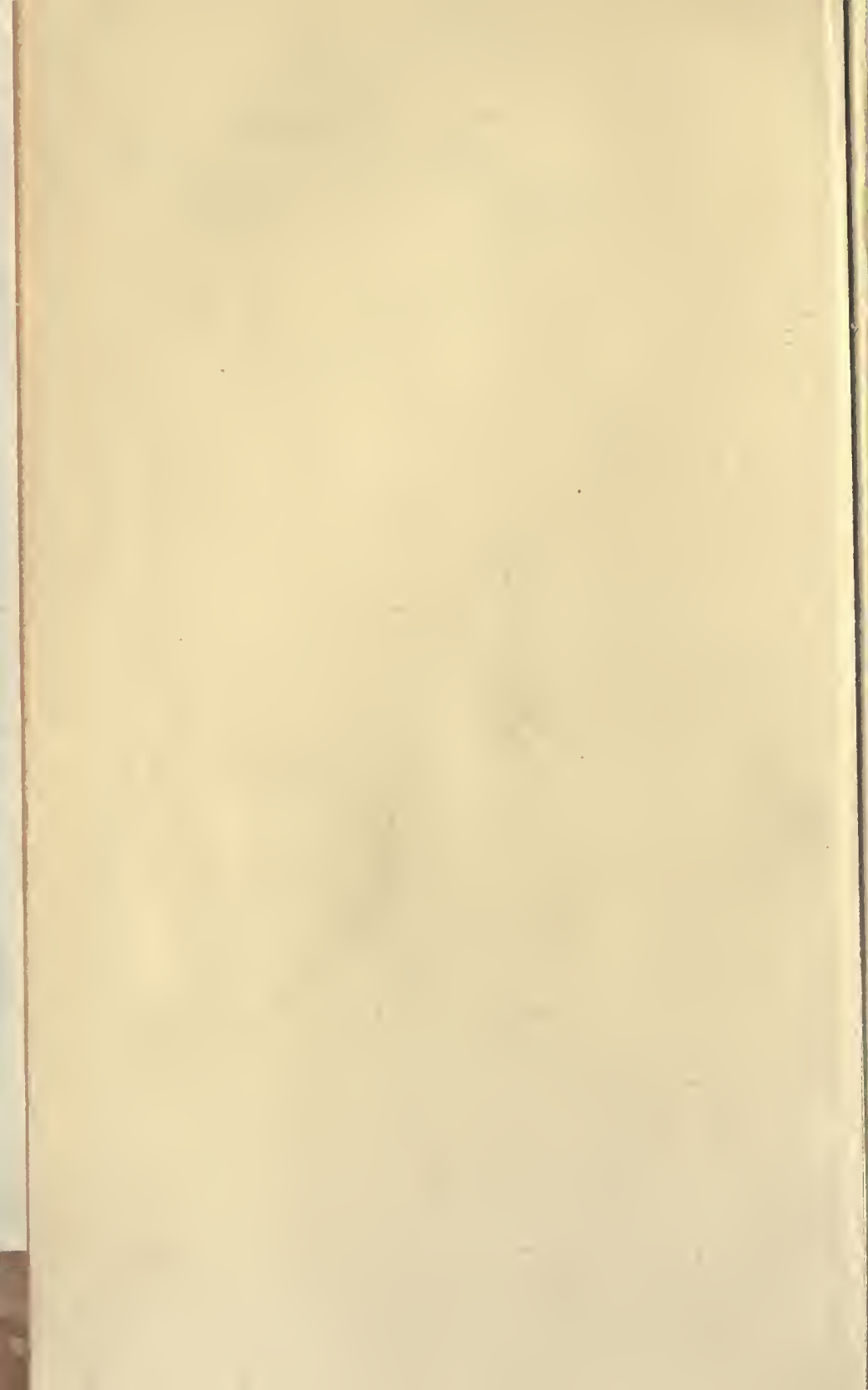


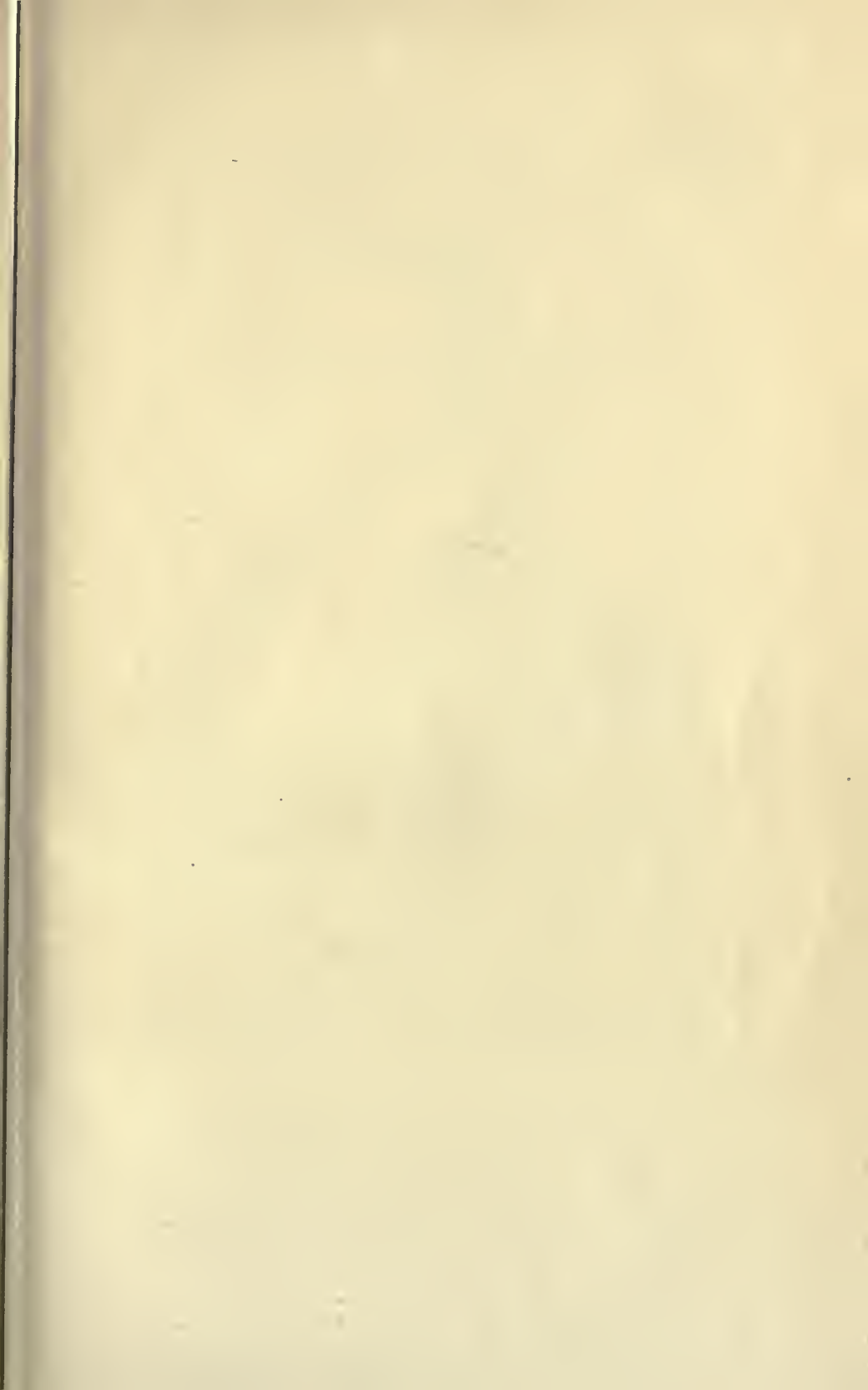
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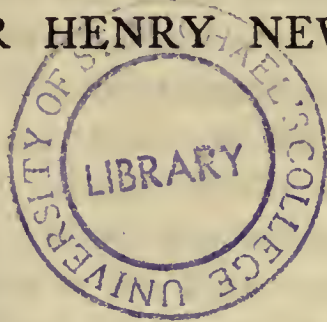
RICHARD HARRIS BARHAM

From an engraving after the portrait by R. J. Lane, A.R.A.

Richard Harris Barham

THE
INGOLDSBY
LEGENDS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
SIR HENRY NEWBOLT



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INGOLDSBY
LEGENDS

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LONDON AND GLASGOW

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Introduction

It is sometimes said that a piece of literature needs no introduction beyond a table of dates; but the rule can hardly be insisted upon in the case of the *Ingoldsby Legends*, for it has been roundly denied that they are literature at all. It would be interesting to know the exact moment at which the *advocatus diaboli* succeeded in turning the judges to this view. The verdict was finally recorded in 1903, when two very capable critics—Dr. Richard Garnett and Mr. Edmund Gosse—published a weighty four-volume *Record of English Literature*, in which all authors worthy of the name were treated at a length proportioned to their value. The lowest in the scale was G. P. R. James, who received a notice some nine words long; but the *Ingoldsby Legends* and their author were left with Calverley and Locker Lampson among the still lower class whose names are never mentioned at all. Against this exclusion I protest. I do not hold a brief for Father Ingoldsby. To be candid, I am not prepared to

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claim a very high place for him: I shall not even plead his long reputation, his generations of friends, his geniality and common sense. He is a modest old fellow, but quite capable of standing on his own feet: his popularity will not stagger under a formal judgment, however weighty. My protest is a general one: I claim that the time is past for classical standards and exclusive judgments. When a writer has once enjoyed the consideration of reasonably qualified contemporaries, and has expressed or influenced their taste, he can no longer be dismissed as a pretender—he must be scientifically observed, described at least, and assigned his place, however obscure, in the line of development. “There are critics”, says Mr. Gosse himself elsewhere, “who seem to know no other mode of nourishing a talent or a taste than that which is pursued by the cultivators of gigantic gooseberries. They do their best to nip off all other buds, that the juices of the tree of Fame may be concentrated on their favourite fruit. Such a plan may be convenient for the purposes of malevolence, and in earlier times our general ignorance of the principles of growth might well excuse it. But it is surely time that we should recognize only two criteria of literary judgment:—Does the work before us, or the author, perform what he

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sets out to perform with a distinguished skill in the direction in which his powers are exercised? If yes, where in the vast and ever shifting scheme of literary evolution does he take his place, and in what relation does he stand, not to those who are least like him, but to those who are of his own kith and kin?" Re-assured by this sound and modern doctrine, we can return cheerfully to the study of our old favourites. Certainly no friend of Father Ingoldsby will fear to test him by such criteria, for whatever he may himself turn out to be, his "kith and kin" are people to whom no critic will ever refuse the honours of literature.

Richard Harris Barham, the author of the *Ingoldsby Legends*, was born in 1788 of a good middle-class family, inherited a small Kentish estate at the age of seven, received a classical education at St. Paul's School and Brasenose College, Oxford, was ordained in due course, and during some thirty-five years filled a succession of minor clerical posts with "an enviable combination of tact, benevolence, and good humour". The literary work to which he owed his wide popularity, and by which alone his memory still lives, lay entirely outside his professional career; but although to his contemporaries, and probably to himself,

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it appeared to be an accidental by-product, it was, in fact, his most authentic offspring, bone of his bone, and full of the vital quality which explains his success and his survival.

The essential part of Barham was his "unflagging spirit of fun". It was this which led him into the society of Hook, Cannon, Charles Mathews, and Sydney Smith, and made him a congenial member of that brotherhood of "diners-out". He made even worse jokes than his friends, and never equalled their reputation for table wit; but in humour he was stronger than most of them, and he had the power, which they lacked, of telling a long story even better than a short one. The result is that while they have left but a disembodied and rather shadowy fame to haunt posterity, Barham still sits and laughs with us in a very substantial form; and this is fortunate, because no one has yet come after him who could exactly fill his easy chair.

We are not of course destitute. There has never been wanting a succession of humourists, duly qualified to serve the State in prose or verse. Since Barham's day a Praed, a Calverley, a Gilbert have been followed by a Seaman, a Couch, a Godley, a J. K. Stephen, and a Graves (or Lucas). Moreover, the modern wits may claim, without fear of contradiction

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from their own contemporaries, that they are, in point of intellect and method, greatly better than their literary forefathers. They choose their subject with care, concentrate on it deliberately, and observe a most fastidious standard of execution. They disdain puns, farcical rhymes, and irrelevant allusions; their temper is as faultless as their metre; they succeed in being at once pungent and passionless. They move us—it is their object to move us—not to the unreflecting spontaneous laughter of boyhood, but to the deep approving chuckle of the mature in mind—a chuckle which seems to leave us not so much happier, as wiser, than we were. They are, in short, artists and critics rather than creators: they contribute to the atmosphere but not to the population of the imaginary world.

Barham has little or nothing in common with these more refined and slender writers. When we look at him we see a different figure from a different age. Not from a primitive age—he is no Rabelais, no laughing Titan with the manners of the extremely early gods,—but he belongs to a time appreciably younger than our own, a generation more copious and less self-conscious, less careful of the boundary that marks off the craftsman from the amateur. He is not in the least concerned with criticism

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either of himself or anyone else: his desire is to tell a story, and above all to tell it as amusingly as possible. He has no need to rack his brains for matter, or wait for the moment of sufficient impulse: he is always teeming, always impulsive. He writes as a child will shout when school is over—from sheer exuberance. His literary output is no task, but, as his friend Hughes said, “the occasional relief of a suppressed plethora of native fun”. However inferior in flavour, his best work may be placed, for pure lightheartedness, on the same shelf as Goldsmith’s *Haunch of Venison*.

It is this abounding fun which at once marks him off from our own generation and makes him so welcome when he returns to visit us. He is a *revenant* from the Age of Dickens: he has to the full its spirit, its naïve facility, and its peculiar vision, with a fair share of its masculine creative force. His characters have not, of course, the intensity of those which haunt *The Old Curiosity Shop* or gather at the Ba—ath; but they are distinctly seen and vigorously drawn—they fill their little stage with movement and colour, they are well grouped and posed, and their words are apt to jingle pleasantly in the memory. The most damaging thing which can be said of the pieces in which they appear is that the plot is never more than

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an anecdote, an unplaced fragment of life; and the author practically admits the charge by the playful inadequacy of the "moral" which he appends to many of his tales. But it must be said, on the other hand, that while the *Ingoldsby Legends* have very little obvious "meaning", they abound in "situations"—there is no question about the success of the dramatic point. A convincing proof of this is their aptness for the purpose of the illustrator. They offer at every turn, what no modern wit (except Gilbert) can possibly afford, a real opportunity for the power of an imaginative draughtsman; and it is significant that among the draughtsmen who have seized the opportunity, John Leech and Cruickshank themselves are numbered. This seems hardly to be due to a mere coincidence of date. Barham's scenes, however far inferior to those of Dickens, are really in the same *genre*. The figures in both are chosen not so much for their typical character as for a certain marked peculiarity. They are not found, like the persons in a modern novel, by scientific observation of ordinary life, but picked out deliberately, in obedience to a personal taste, for their extraordinary quality. This taste, this positive relish for the abnormal, for the comically or tragically queer, was as undoubtedly common

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to the two writers, as the language in which they wrote; but the one either saw the quality, or created it, everywhere, while the other hunted it like a collector, and found it chiefly in libraries or in the notebooks of his friends. It was a further sign of weakness in Barham that, among the possible forms of the queer, his taste leaned rather decidedly towards the supernatural. Happily his mood was not often morbid. There is only one really unwholesome mystery in the *Legends*—the “Singular Passage in the Life of the late Henry Harris, D.D.”—and that we can the more easily omit from our collection, because, as Barham’s son and biographer confesses, “it has indeed little in common with the productions with which it is at present associated.”

The selection now offered is not quite an arbitrary one. It represents a personal preference, but a preference which is in accord with Barham’s own most characteristic taste. He was a lover of the romance of history, a zealous student of what we often hear called “antiquities.” On this side he was as far from the school of Dickens as he was nearly related to his contemporary Peacock. No one who knows the two books will miss the resemblance between *Maid Marian* and those of the *Legends* which deal with a mediæval subject. The two

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authors were in temperament very different. The epithets "whimsical and splenetic", which fitted Peacock like a pair of gloves, could not by any stretching be made to cover Barham's sane and genial mood. But both loved strongly marked character, both revelled in a humorous situation; under the afflatus of pure gusto both became lyrical—Peacock more elegantly, Barham more unintermittently, lyrical. As for the Muse of History, both made her dance some false steps, but the will was not to blame; only their vivacity was now and then stronger than their sense of time. Their merit was that they knew the difference between a historical scene and a museum model; they made their heroes men first and mediæval afterwards. In this they were—though Barham never thought of it and Peacock would have denied it—on the side of Walter Scott against Queenhoo Hall and Wardour Street, and were themselves doing not a little to discredit the always popular superstition that we are descended from jerkins and farthingales, stained-glass warriors and ladies carved in stone. If only for this, I wish them long life and reputation.

HENRY NEWBOLT.

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Grey Dolphin

A LEGEND OF SHEPPEY

[The succeeding Legend has long been an established favourite with all of us, as containing much of the personal history of one of the greatest ornaments of the family tree.

To the wedding of the sole heiress of this redoubted hero and a direct ancestor is it owing that the Lioncels of Shurland hang so lovingly parallel with the Saltire of the Ingoldsbys, and now form as cherished a quartering in their escutcheon as the "dozen white lowses" in the "old coat" of Shallow.]

"He won't—won't he? Then bring me my boots!" said the Baron.

Consternation was at its height in the castle of Shurland—a caitiff had dared to disobey the Baron! and—the Baron had called for his boots!

A thunderbolt in the great hall had been a *bagatelle* to it.

A few days before, a notable miracle had been wrought in the neighbourhood; and in those times miracles were not so common as they are now; no royal balloons, no steam; no railroads,—while the few Saints who took the trouble to walk with their heads under

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their arms, or to pull the Devil by the nose, scarcely appeared above once in a century ; so the affair made the greater sensation.

The clock had done striking twelve, and the Clerk of Chatham was untrussing his points preparatory to seeking his truckle-bed ; a half-emptied tankard of mild ale stood at his elbow, the roasted crab yet floating on its surface. Midnight had surprised the worthy functionary while occupied in discussing it, and with his task yet unaccomplished. He meditated a mighty draft : one hand was fumbling with his tags, while the other was extended in the act of grasping the jorum, when a knock on the portal, solemn and sonorous, arrested his fingers. It was repeated thrice ere Emmanuel Saddleton had presence of mind sufficient to enquire who sought admittance at that untimeous hour.

“Open ! open ! good Clerk of St. Bridget’s,” said a female voice, small, yet distinct and sweet,—an excellent thing in woman.

The Clerk arose, crossed to the doorway, and undid the latchet.

On the threshold stood a Lady of surpassing beauty : her robes were rich, and large, and full ; and a diadem, sparkling with gems that shed a halo around, crowned her brow. She beckoned the Clerk as he stood in astonishment before her.

“Emmanuel !” said the Lady ; and her tones sounded like those of a silver flute. “Emmanuel Saddleton, truss up your points and follow me !”

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The worthy Clerk stared aghast at the vision ; the purple robe, the cymar, the coronet,—above all, the smile ; no, there was no mistaking her ; it was the blessed St. Bridget herself !

And what could have brought the sainted lady out of her warm shrine at such a time of night ? and on such a night ? for it was as dark as pitch, and, metaphorically speaking, “rained cats and dogs”.

Emmanuel could not speak, so he looked the question.

“No matter for that,” said the Saint, answering to his thought. “No matter for that, Emmanuel Saddleton ; only follow me, and you’ll see !”

The Clerk turned a wistful eye at the corner-cupboard.

“Oh ! never mind the lantern, Emmanuel : you’ll not want it : but you may bring a mattock and a shovel.” As she spoke, the beautiful apparition held up her delicate hand. From the tip of each of her long taper fingers issued a lambent flame of such surpassing brilliancy as would have plunged a whole gas company into despair—it was a “Hand of Glory”, such a one as tradition tells us yet burns in Rochester Castle every St. Mark’s Eve. Many are the daring individuals who have watched in Gundulph’s Tower, hoping to find it, and the treasure it guards ;—but none of them ever did.

“This way, Emmanuel !” and a flame of peculiar radiance streamed from her little finger as it pointed to the pathway leading to the churchyard.

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Saddleton shouldered his tools, and followed in silence.

The cemetery of St. Bridget's was some half-mile distant from the Clerk's domicile, and adjoined a chapel dedicated to that illustrious lady, who, after leading but a so-so life, had died in the odour of sanctity. Emmanuel Saddleton was fat and scant of breath, the mattock was heavy, and the Saint walked too fast for him: he paused to take second wind at the end of the first furlong.

"Emmanuel," said the holy lady good-humouredly, for she heard him puffing; "rest awhile, Emmanuel, and I'll tell you what I want with you."

Her auditor wiped his brow with the back of his hand, and looked all attention and obedience.

"Emmanuel," continued she, "what did you and Father Fothergill, and the rest of you, mean yesterday by burying that drowned man so close to me? He died in mortal sin, Emmanuel; no shrift, no unction, no absolution: why, he might as well have been excommunicated. He plagues me with his grinning, and I can't have any peace in my shrine. You must howk him up again, Emmanuel!"

"To be sure, madame,—my lady,—that is, your holiness," stammered Saddleton, trembling at the thought of the task assigned to him. "To be sure, your ladyship; only—that is—"

"Emmanuel," said the Saint, "you'll do my bidding; or it would be better you had!" and her eye changed from a dove's eye to that of a

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hawk, and a flash came from it as bright as the one from her little finger. The Clerk shook in his shoes; and, again dashing the cold perspiration from his brow, followed the footsteps of his mysterious guide.

The next morning all Chatham was in an uproar. The Clerk of St. Bridget's had found himself at home at daybreak, seated in his own arm-chair, the fire out, and—the tankard of ale out too! Who had drunk it?—where had he been?—how had he got home?—all was a mystery!—he remembered “a mass of things, but nothing distinctly”; all was fog and fantasy. What he could clearly recollect was, that he had dug up the Grinning Sailor, and that the Saint had helped to throw him into the river again. All was thenceforth wonderment and devotion. Masses were sung, tapers were kindled, bells were tolled; the monks of St. Romuald had a solemn procession, the abbot at their head, the sacristan at their tail, and the holy breeches of St. Thomas à Becket in the centre;—Father Fothergill brewed a XXX puncheon of holy water. The Rood of Gillingham was deserted; the chapel of Rainham forsaken; everyone who had a soul to be saved, flocked with his offering to St. Bridget's shrine, and Emmanuel Saddleton gathered more fees from the promiscuous piety of that one week than he had pocketed during the twelve preceding months.

Meanwhile the corpse of the ejected reprobate oscillated like a pendulum between Sheer-

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ness and Gillingham Reach. Now borne by the Medway into the Western Swale,—now carried by the reflux tide back to the vicinity of its old quarters,—it seemed as though the River god and Neptune were amusing themselves with a game of subaqueous battledore, and had chosen this unfortunate carcass as a marine shuttlecock. For some time the alternation was kept up with great spirit, till Boreas, interfering in the shape of a stiffish “Nor’wester”, drifted the bone (and flesh) of contention ashore on the Shurland domain, where it lay in all the majesty of mud. It was soon discovered by the retainers, and dragged from its oozy bed, grinning worse than ever. Tidings of the godsend were of course carried instantly to the castle; for the Baron was a very great man; and if a dun cow had flown across his property unannounced by the warder, the Baron would have kicked him, the said warder, from the topmost battlement into the bottommost ditch,—a descent of peril, and one which “Ludwig the leaper”, or the illustrious Trenck himself might well have shrunk from encountering.

“An’t please your lordship——” said Peter Periwinkle.

“No, villain! it does not please me!” roared the Baron.

His lordship was deeply engaged with a peck of Feversham oysters,—he doted on shellfish, hated interruption at meals, and had not yet despatched more than twenty dozen of the “natives”.

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"There's a body, my lord, washed ashore in the lower creek," said the seneschal.

The Baron was going to throw the shells at his head; but paused in the act, and said with much dignity:

"Turn out the fellow's pockets!"

But the defunct had before been subjected to the double scrutiny of Father Fothergill and the Clerk of St. Bridget's. It was ill gleaning after such hands; there was not a single maravedi.

We have already said that Sir Robert de Shurland, Lord of the Isle of Sheppey, and of many a fair manor on the mainland, was a man of worship. He had rights of free-warren, saccage and sockage, cuisage and jambage, fosse and fork, infang theofe and outfang theofe; and all waifs and strays belonged to him in fee simple.

"Turn out his pockets!" said the Knight.

"An't please you, my lord, I must say as how they was turned out afore, and the devil a rap's left."

"Then bury the blackguard!"

"Please your lordship, he has been buried once."

"Then bury him again, and be ——!"
The Baron bestowed a benediction.

The seneschal bowed low as he left the room, and the Baron went on with his oysters.

Scarcely ten dozen more had vanished when Periwinkle reappeared.

"An't please you, my lord, Father Fother-

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gill says as how that it's the Grinning Sailor, and he won't bury him anyhow."

"Oh! he won't—won't he?" said the Baron. Can it be wondered at that he called for his boots?

Sir Robert de Shurland, Lord of Shurland and Minster, Baron of Sheppey *in comitatu* Kent, was, as has been before hinted, a very great man. He was also a very little man; that is, he was relatively great, and relatively little,—or physically little and metaphorically great,—like Sir Sidney Smith and the late Mr. Bonaparte. To the frame of a dwarf he united the soul of a giant, and the valour of a gamecock. Then, for so small a man, his strength was prodigious; his fist would fell an ox, and his kick—oh! his kick was tremendous, and, when he had his boots on, would,—to use an expression of his own, which he had picked up in the holy wars,—would "send a man from Jericho to June". He was bull-necked and bandy-legged; his chest was broad and deep, his head large, and uncommonly thick, his eyes a little bloodshot, and his nose *retroussé* with a remarkably red tip. Strictly speaking, the Baron could not be called handsome: but his *tout ensemble* was singularly impressive: and when he called for his boots, everybody trembled and dreaded the worst.

"Periwinkle," said the Baron, as he encased his better leg, "let the grave be twenty feet deep!"

"Your lordship's command is law."

"And, Periwinkle,"—Sir Robert stamped

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his left heel into its receptacle,—“and, Periwinkle, see that it be wide enough to hold not exceeding two!”

“Ye—ye—yes, my lord.”

“And, Periwinkle,—tell Father Fothergill I would fain speak with his Reverence.”

“Ye—ye—yes, my lord.”

The Baron's beard was peaked; and his mustaches, stiff and stumpy, projected horizontally like those of a Tom Cat; he twirled the one, he stroked the other, he drew the buckle of his surcingle a thought tighter, and strode down the great staircase three steps at a stride.

The vassals were assembled in the great hall of Shurland Castle; every cheek was pale, every tongue was mute: expectation and perplexity were visible on every brow. What would his lordship do? Were the recusant anybody else, gyves to the heels and hemp to the throat were but too good for him: but it was Father Fothergill who had said “I won't”; and though the Baron was a very great man, the Pope was a greater, and the Pope was Father Fothergill's great friend—some people said he was his uncle.

Father Fothergill was busy in the refectory trying conclusions with a venison pasty, when he received the summons of his patron to attend him in the chapel cemetery. Of course he lost no time in obeying it, for obedience was the general rule in Shurland Castle. If anybody ever said “I won't”, it was the exception; and, like all other exceptions, only

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proved the rule the stronger. The Father was a friar of the Augustine persuasion; a brotherhood which, having been planted in Kent some few centuries earlier, had taken very kindly to the soil, and overspread the county much as hops did some few centuries later. He was plump and portly, a little thick-winded, especially after dinner,—stood five feet four in his sandals, and weighed hard upon eighteen stone. He was moreover a personage of singular piety; and the iron girdle, which, he said, he wore under his cassock to mortify withal, might have been well mistaken for the tire of a cart wheel.—When he arrived, Sir Robert was pacing up and down by the side of a newly opened grave.

“*Benedicite!* fair son,”—(the Baron was as brown as a cigar,)—“*Benedicite!*” said the Chaplain.

The Baron was too angry to stand upon compliment. “Bury me that grinning caitiff there!” quoth he, pointing to the defunct.

“It may not be, fair son,” said the Friar; “he hath perished without absolution.”

“Bury the body!” roared Sir Robert.

“Water and earth alike reject him,” returned the Chaplain; “holy St. Bridget herself——”

“Bridget me no Bridgets!—do me thine office quickly, Sir Shaveling; or, by the Piper that played before Moses——” The oath was a fearful one; and whenever the Baron swore to do mischief, he was never known to perjure himself. He was playing with the hilt of his

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sword. "Do me thine office, I say. Give him his passport to Heaven!"

"He is already gone to Hell!" stammered the Friar.

"Then do you go after him!" thundered the Lord of Shurland.

His sword half leaped from its scabbard. No!—The trenchant blade, that had cut Suleiman Ben Malek Ben Buckskin from helmet to chine, disdained to daub itself with the cerebellum of a miserable monk;—it leaped back again;—and as the Chaplain, scared at its flash, turned him in terror, the Baron gave him a kick!—one kick!—it was but one!—but such a one! Despite its obesity, up flew his holy body in an angle of forty-five degrees; then, having reached its highest point of elevation, sunk headlong into the open grave that yawned to receive it. If the reverend gentleman had possessed such a thing as a neck, he had infallibly broken it; as he did not, he only dislocated his vertebræ,—but that did quite as well. He was as dead as ditchwater!

"In with the other rascal!" said the Baron, —and he was obeyed; for there he stood in his boots. Mattock and shovel made short work of it; twenty feet of superincumbent mould pressed down alike the saint and the sinner. "Now sing a requiem who list!" said the Baron, and his lordship went back to his oysters.

The vassals at Castle Shurland were astounded, or, as the Seneschal Hugh better expressed it, "perfectly conglomerated", by

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this event. What! murder a monk in the odour of sanctity,—and on consecrated ground too! They trembled for the health of the Baron's soul. To the unsophisticated many it seemed that matters could not have been much worse had he shot a bishop's coach-horse,—all looked for some signal judgment. The melancholy catastrophe of their neighbours at Canterbury was yet rife in their memories: not two centuries had elapsed since those miserable sinners had cut off the tail of the blessed St. Thomas's mule. The tail of the mule, it was well known, had been forthwith affixed to that of the Mayor; and rumour said it had since been hereditary in the corporation. The least that could be expected was, that Sir Robert should have a friar tacked on to his for the term of his natural life! Some bolder spirits there were, 'tis true, who viewed the matter in various lights, according to their different temperaments and dispositions; for perfect unanimity existed not even in the good old times. The verderer, roistering Hob Roebuck, swore roundly, "'Twere as good a deed as eat to kick down the chapel as well as the monk." Hob had stood there in a white sheet for kissing Giles Miller's daughter. On the other hand Simpkin Agnew, the bell-ringer, doubted if the devil's cellar, which runs under the bottomless abyss, were quite deep enough for the delinquent, and speculated on the probability of a hole being dug in it for his especial accommodation. The philosophers and economists thought, with Saunders McBul-

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lock the Baron's bagpiper, that "a feckless monk more or less was nae great subject for a clamjamphry," especially as "the supply considerably exceeded the demand"; while Malthouse, the tapster, was arguing to Dame Martin that a murder now and then was a seasonable check to population, without which the Isle of Sheppey would in time be devoured, like a mouldy cheese, by inhabitants of its own producing. Meanwhile, the Baron ate his oysters and thought no more of the matter.

But this tranquillity of his lordship was not to last. A couple of saints had been seriously offended; and we have all of us read at school that celestial minds are by no means insensible to the provocations of anger. There were those who expected that St. Bridget would come in person, and have the friar up again, as she did the sailor; but perhaps her ladyship did not care to trust herself within the walls of Shurland Castle. To say the truth, it was scarcely a decent house for a female saint to be seen in. The Baron's gallantries, since he became a widower, had been but too notorious; and her own reputation was a little blown upon in the earlier days of her earthly pilgrimage: then things were so apt to be misrepresented; in short, she would leave the whole affair to St. Austin, who, being a gentleman, could interfere with propriety, avenge her affront as well as his own, and leave no loophole for scandal. St. Austin himself seems to have had his scruples, though of their precise nature it would be difficult to determine, for it were

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idle to suppose him at all afraid of the Baron's boots. Be this as it may, the mode which he adopted was at once prudent and efficacious: As an ecclesiastic, he could not well call the Baron out,—had his boots been out of the question;—so he resolved to have recourse to the law. Instead of Shurland Castle, therefore, he repaired forthwith to his own magnificent monastery, situate just within the walls of Canterbury, and presented himself in a vision to its abbot. No one who has ever visited that ancient city, can fail to recollect the splendid gateway which terminates the vista of St. Paul's Street, and stands there yet in all its pristine beauty. The tiny train of miniature artillery which now adorns its battlements is, it is true, an ornament of a later date; and is said to have been added some centuries after by a learned but jealous proprietor, for the purpose of shooting any wiser man than himself who might chance to come that way. Tradition is silent as to any discharge having taken place, nor can the oldest inhabitant of modern days recollect any such occurrence. Here it was, in a handsome chamber, immediately over the lofty archway, that the Superior of the monastery lay buried in a brief slumber snatched from his accustomed vigils. His mitre—for he was a Mitred Abbot, and had a seat in Parliament—rested on a table beside him; near it stood a silver flagon of Gascony wine, ready, no doubt, for the pious uses of the morrow. Fasting and watching had made him more than usually somnolent, than which nothing could

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have been better for the purpose of the Saint, who now appeared to him radiant in all the colours of the rainbow.

"Anselm!" said the beatific vision,—“Anselm! are you not a pretty fellow to lie snoring there, when your brethren are being knocked at head, and Mother Church herself is menaced? —It is a sin and a shame. Anselm!”

“What’s the matter!—Who are you?” cried the Abbot, rubbing his eyes, which the celestial splendour of his visitor had set a-winking. “Ave Maria! St. Austin himself!—Speak, *Beatissime!* what would you with the humblest of your votaries!”

“Anselm!” said the Saint, “a brother of our order, whose soul Heaven assoilzie! hath been foully murdered. He hath been ignominiously kicked to the death, Anselm; and there he lieth cheek-by-jowl with a wretched carcass, which our sister Bridget has turned out of her cemetery for unseemly grinning. Arouse thee, Anselm!”

“Ay, so please you, *Sanctissime!*” said the Abbot. “I will order forthwith that thirty masses be said, thirty *Paters*, and thirty *Aves*.”

“Thirty fools’ heads!” interrupted his patron, who was a little peppery.

“I will send for bell, book, and candle——”

“Send for an inkhorn, Anselm. Write me now a letter to his Holiness the Pope in good round terms, and another to the Coroner, and another to the Sheriff, and seize me the never-enough-to-be-anathematized villain who hath done this deed! Hang him as high as Haman,

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Anselm!—up with him!—down with his dwelling-place, root and branch, hearthstone and roof-tree,—down with it all, and sow the site with salt and sawdust!”

St. Austin, it will be perceived, was a radical reformer.

“Marry will I,” quoth the Abbot, warming with the Saint’s eloquence: “ay, marry will I, and that *instante*. But there is one thing you have forgotten, most Beatified—the name of the culprit.”

“Robert de Shurland.”

“The Lord of Sheppey! Bless me!” said the Abbot, crossing himself, “won’t that be rather inconvenient? Sir Robert is a bold baron, and a powerful;—blows will come and go, and crowns will be cracked and——”

“What is that to you, since yours will not be of the number?”

“Very true, *Beatissime*!—I will don me with speed, and do your bidding.”

“Do so, Anselm!—fail not to hang the baron, burn his castle, confiscate his estate, and buy me two large wax candles for my own particular shrine out of your share of the property.”

With this solemn injunction the vision began to fade.

“One thing more!” cried the Abbot, grasping his rosary.

“What is that?” asked the Saint.

“O *Beate Augustine, ora pro nobis*!”

“Of course I shall,” said St. Austin. “*Pax vobiscum*!”—and Abbot Anselm was left alone.

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Within an hour all Canterbury was in commotion. A friar had been murdered,—two friars—ten—twenty ; a whole convent had been assaulted, sacked, burnt,—all the monks had been killed, and all the nuns had been kissed !—Murder !—fire !—sacrilege ! Never was city in such an uproar. From St. George's gate to St. Dunstan's suburb, from the Donjon to the borough of Staplegate, all was noise and hubbub. “Where was it ?”—“When was it ?”—“How was it ?” The Mayor caught up his chain, the Aldermen donned their furred gowns, the Town Clerk put on his spectacles. “Who was he ?”—“What was he ?”—“Where was he ?”—he should be hanged,—he should be burned,—he should be broiled,—he should be fried,—he should be scraped to death with red-hot oyster-shells !” “Who was he ?”—“What was his name ?”

The Abbot's Apparitor drew forth his roll and read aloud :—“Sir Robert de Shurland, Knight banneret, Baron of Shurland and Minister, and Lord of Sheppey.”

The Mayor put his chain in his pocket, the Aldermen took off their gowns, the Town Clerk put his pen behind his ear. It was a county business altogether :—the Sheriff had better call out the *posse comitatus*.

While saints and sinners were thus leaguering against him, the Baron de Shurland was quietly eating his breakfast. He had passed a tranquil night, undisturbed by dreams of cowl or capuchin ; nor was his appetite more affected than his conscience. On the contrary, he sat rather

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longer over his meal than usual : luncheon-time came, and he was ready as ever for his oysters : but scarcely had Dame Martin opened his first half-dozen when the warder's horn was heard from the barbican.

"Who the devil's that?" said Sir Robert. "I'm not at home, Periwinkle. I hate to be disturbed at meals, and I won't be at home to anybody."

"An't please your lordship," answered the seneschal, "Paul Prior hath given notice that there is a body——"

"Another body!" roared the Baron. "Am I to be everlastingly plagued with bodies! No time allowed me to swallow a morsel. Throw it into the moat!"

"So please you, my lord, it is a body of horse,—and—and Paul says there is a still larger body of foot behind it; and he thinks, my lord,—that is, he does not know, but he thinks—and we all think, my lord, that they are coming to—to besiege the castle!"

"Besiege the castle! Who? What? What for?"

"Paul says, my lord, that he can see the banner of St. Austin, and the bleeding heart of Hamo de Crevecœur, the Abbot's chief vassal; and there is John de Northwood, the sheriff, with his red cross engrailed; and Hever, and Leybourne, and Heaven knows how many more; and they are all coming on as fast as ever they can."

"Periwinkle," said the Baron, "up with the drawbridge; down with the portcullis; bring

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me a cup of canary, and my nightcap. I won't be bothered with them. I shall go to bed."

"To bed, my lord?" cried Periwinkle, with a look that seemed to say, "He's crazy!"

At this moment the shrill tones of a trumpet were heard to sound thrice from the campaign. It was the signal for parley: the Baron changed his mind; instead of going to bed, he went to the ramparts.

"Well, rascallions! and what now!" said the Baron.

A herald, two pursuivants, and a trumpeter occupied the foreground of the scene; behind them, some three hundred paces off, upon a rising ground, was drawn up in battle array the main body of the ecclesiastical forces.

"Hear you, Robert de Shurland, Knight, Baron of Shurland and Minster, and Lord of Sheppey, and know all men, by these presents, that I do hereby attach you, the said Robert, of murder and sacrilege, now, or of late, done and committed by you, the said Robert, contrary to the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, his crown and dignity: and I do hereby require and charge you, the said Robert, to forthwith surrender and give up your own proper person, together with the Castle of Shurland aforesaid, in order that the same may be duly dealt with according to law. And here standeth John de Northwood, Esquire, good man and true, sheriff of this his Majesty's most loyal county of Kent, to enforce the same, if need be, with his *posse comitatus*——"

"His what?" said the Baron.

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"His *posse comitatus*, and——"

"Go to Bath!" said the Baron.

A defiance so contemptuous roused the ire of the adverse commanders. A volley of missiles rattled about the Baron's ears. Nightcaps avail little against contusions. He left the walls, and returned to the great hall.

"Let them pelt away," quoth the Baron; "there are no windows to break, and they can't get in." So he took his afternoon nap, and the siege went on.

Towards evening his lordship awoke, and grew tired of the din. Guy Pearson, too, had got a black eye from a brick-bat, and the assailants were clambering over the outer wall. So the Baron called for his Sunday hauberk of Milan steel, and his great two-handed sword with the terrible name;—it was the fashion in feudal times to give names to swords: King Arthur's was christened Excalibar; the Baron called his Tickletohy, and whenever he took it in hand it was no joke.

"Up with the portcullis! down with the bridge!" said Sir Robert; and out he sallied, followed by the *élite* of his retainers. Then there was a pretty to-do. Heads flew one way—arms and legs another; round went Tickletohy; and, wherever it alighted, down came horse and man: the Baron excelled himself that day. All that he had done in Palestine faded in the comparison; he had fought for fun there, but now it was for life and lands. Away went John de Northwood; away went William of Hever, and Roger of Leybourne.

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Hamo de Crevecœur, with the church vassals and the banner of St. Austin, had been gone some time. The siege was raised, and the Lord of Sheppey was left alone in his glory.

But, brave as the Baron undoubtedly was, and total as had been the defeat of his enemies, it cannot be supposed that *La Stoccata* would be allowed to carry it away thus. It has before been hinted that Abbot Anselm had written to the Pope, and Boniface the Eighth piqued himself on his punctuality as a correspondent in all matters connected with church discipline. He sent back an answer by return of post; and by it all Christian people were strictly enjoined to aid in exterminating the offender, on pain of the greater excommunication in this world, and a million of years of purgatory in the next. But then, again, Boniface the Eighth was rather at a discount in England just then. He had affronted Longshanks, as the loyal lieges had nicknamed their monarch; and Longshanks had been rather sharp upon the clergy in consequence. If the Baron de Shurland could but get the King's pardon for what, in his cooler moments, he admitted to be a peccadillo, he might sniff at the Pope, and bid him "do his devilmost".

Fortune, who, as the poet says, delights to favour the bold, stood his friend on this occasion. Edward had been, for some time, collecting a large force on the coast of Kent, to carry on his French wars for the recovery of Guienne; he was expected shortly to review it in person; but, then, the troops lay principally in canton-

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ments about the mouth of the Thames, and his Majesty was to come down by water. What was to be done?—the royal barge was in sight, and John de Northwood and Hamo de Crevecœur had broken up all the boats to boil their camp-kettles. A truly great mind is never without resources.

“Bring me my boots!” said the Baron.

They brought him his boots, and his dapple-grey steed along with them. Such a courser! all blood and bone, short-backed, broad-chested, and—but that he was a little ewe-necked—faultless in form and figure. The Baron sprang upon his back, and dashed at once into the river.

The barge which carried Edward Longshanks and his fortunes had by this time nearly reached the Nore; the stream was broad and the current strong, but Sir Robert and his steed were almost as broad, and a great deal stronger. After breasting the tide gallantly for a couple of miles, the Knight was near enough to hail the steersman.

“What have we got here?” said the King. —“It’s a mermaid,” said one. “It’s a grampus,” said another. “It’s the devil,” said a third. But they were all wrong; it was only Robert de Shurland. “Grammercy,” quoth the King, “that fellow was never born to be drowned!”

It has been said before that the Baron had fought in the Holy Wars; in fact, he had accompanied Longshanks, when only heir apparent, in his expedition twenty-five years

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before, although his name is unaccountably omitted by Sir Harris Nicolas in his list of crusaders. He had been present at Acre when Amirand of Joppa stabbed the prince with a poisoned dagger, and had lent Princess Eleanor his own tooth-brush after she had sucked out the venom from the wound. He had slain certain Saracens, contented himself with his own plunder, and never dunned the commissariat for arrears of pay. Of course he ranked high in Edward's good graces, and had received the honour of knighthood at his hands on the field of battle.

In one so circumstanced it cannot be supposed that such a trifle as the killing of a frowzy friar would be much resented, even had he not taken so bold a measure to obtain his pardon. His petition was granted, of course, as soon as asked; and so it would have been had the indictment drawn up by the Canterbury town-clerk, viz., "That he the said Robert de Shurland, etc., had then and there, with several, to wit, one thousand, pairs of boots, given sundry, to wit, two thousand, kicks, and therewith and thereby killed divers, to wit, ten thousand, Austin friars," been true to the letter.

Thrice did the gallant grey circumnavigate the barge, while Robert de Winchelsey, the chancellor, and archbishop to boot, was making out, albeit with great reluctance, the royal pardon. The interval was sufficiently long to enable His Majesty, who, gracious as he was, had always an eye to business, just to hint that

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the gratitude he felt towards the Baron was not unmixed with a lively sense of services to come; and that, if life were now spared him, common decency must oblige him to make himself useful. Before the archbishop, who had scalded his fingers with the wax in affixing the great seal, had time to take them out of his mouth, all was settled, and the Baron de Shurland had pledged himself to be forthwith in readiness, *cum suis*, to accompany his liege lord to Guienne.

With the royal pardon secured in his vest, boldly did his lordship turn again to the shore; and as boldly did his courser oppose his breadth of chest to the stream. It was a work of no common difficulty or danger; a steed of less "mettle and bone" had long since sunk in the effort; as it was, the Baron's boots were full of water, and Grey Dolphin's chamfrain more than once dipped beneath the wave. The convulsive snorts of the noble animal showed his distress; each instant they became more loud and frequent; when his hoof touched the strand, and "the horse and his rider" stood once again in safety on the shore.

Rapidly dismounting, the Baron was loosening the girths of his demi-pique, to give the panting animal breath, when he was aware of as ugly an old woman as he had ever clapped eyes upon, peeping at him under the horse's belly.

"Make much of your steed, Robert Shurland! Make much of your steed!" cried the hag, shaking at him her long and bony finger.

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"Groom to the hide, and corn to the manger! He has saved your life, Robert Shurland, for the nonce; but he shall yet be the means of your losing it, for all that!"

The Baron started: "What's that you say, you old faggot?" He ran round by his horse's tail; the woman was gone!

The Baron paused; his great soul was not to be shaken by trifles; he looked around him, and solemnly ejaculated the word "Humbug!" then slinging the bridle across his arm, walked slowly on in the direction of the castle.

The appearance, and still more the disappearance, of the crone, had however made an impression; every step he took he became more thoughtful. "'Twould be deuced provoking, though, if he *should* break my neck after all." He turned and gazed at Dolphin with the scrutinizing eye of a veterinary surgeon. "I'll be shot if he is not groggy!" said the Baron.

With his lordship, like another great Commander, "Once to be in doubt, was once to be resolved": it would never do to go to the wars on a rickety prad. He dropped the rein, drew forth Tickletohy, and, as the enfranchised Dolphin, good easy horse, stretched out his ewe-neck to the herbage, struck off his head at a single blow. "There, you lying old beldame!" said the Baron: "now take him away to the knacker's."

Three years were come and gone. King

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Edward's French wars were over; both parties, having fought till they came to a standstill, shook hands; and the quarrel, as usual, was patched up by a royal marriage. This happy event gave His Majesty leisure to turn his attention to Scotland, where things, through the intervention of William Wallace, were looking rather queerish. As his reconciliation with Philip now allowed of his fighting the Scotch in peace and quietness, the monarch lost no time in marching his long legs across the border, and the short ones of the Baron followed him of course. At Falkirk, Tickletohy was in great request; and in the year following, we find a contemporary poet hinting at his master's prowess under the walls of Caerlaverlock,

*Ovec eus fu achiminez
Li beau Robert de Shurland
Ki kant seoit sur le cheval
Ne sembloit home ke someille.*

A quatrain which Mr. Simpkinson translates,

“With them was marching
The good Robert de Shurland,
Who, when seated on horseback,
Does not resemble a man asleep!”

So thoroughly awake, indeed, does he seem to have proved himself, that the bard subsequently exclaims, in an ecstasy of admiration,

*St ie estoie une pucelette
Je li donrie ceur et cors
Tant est de lu bons li recors.*

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"If I were a young maiden,
I would give my heart and person,
So great is his fame!"

Fortunately the poet was a tough old monk of Exeter; since such a present to a nobleman, now in his grand climacteric, would hardly have been worth the carriage. With the reduction of the stronghold of the Maxwells seem to have concluded the Baron's military services; as on the very first day of the fourteenth century we find him once more landed on his native shore, and marching, with such of his retainers as the wars had left him, towards the hospitable shelter of Shurland Castle. It was then, upon that very beach, some hundred yards distant from high-water mark, that his eye fell upon something like an ugly old woman in a red cloak! She was seated on what seemed to be a large stone, in an interesting attitude, with her elbows resting upon her knees, and her chin upon her thumbs. The Baron started: the remembrance of his interview with a similar personage in the same place some three years since, flashed upon his recollection. He rushed towards the spot, but the form was gone;—nothing remained but the seat it had appeared to occupy. This, on examination, turned out to be no stone, but the whitened skull of a dead horse! A tender remembrance of the deceased Grey Dolphin shot a momentary pang into the Baron's bosom; he drew the back of his hand across his face; the thought of the hag's pre-

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diction in an instant rose, and banished all softer emotions. In utter contempt of his own weakness, yet with a tremor that deprived his redoubtable kick of half its wonted force, he spurned the relic with his foot. One word alone issued from his lips, elucidatory of what was passing in his mind—it long remained imprinted on the memory of his faithful followers—that word was “Gammon!” The skull bounded across the beach till it reached the very margin of the stream;—one instant more, and it would be engulfed for ever. At that moment a loud “Ha! ha! ha!” was distinctly heard by the whole train to issue from its bleached and toothless jaws; it sank beneath the flood in a horse laugh.

Meanwhile Sir Robert de Shurland felt an odd sort of sensation in his right foot. His boots had suffered in the wars. Great pains had been taken for their preservation. They had been “soled” and “heeled” more than once;—had they been “goloshed”, their owner might have defied Fate! Well has it been said that “there is no such thing as a trifle”. A nobleman’s life depended upon a question of ninepence.

The Baron marched on; the uneasiness in his foot increased. He plucked off his boot;—a horse’s tooth was sticking in his great toe!

The result may be anticipated. Lame as he was, his lordship, with characteristic decision, would hobble on to Shurland; his walk increased the inflammation; a flagon of *aqua vite* did not mend matters. He was in a high

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fever; he took to his bed. Next morning the toe presented the appearance of a Bedfordshire carrot; by dinner-time it had deepened to beet-root; and when Bargrave, the leech, at last sliced it off, the gangrene was too confirmed to admit of remedy. Dame Martin thought it high time to send for Miss Margaret, who, ever since her mother's death, had been living with her maternal aunt, the abbess, in the Ursuline convent at Greenwich. The young lady came, and with her came one Master Ingoldsby, her cousin-german by the mother's side; but the Baron was too far gone in the dead-thraw to recognize either. He died as he lived, unconquered and unconquerable. His last words were—"Tell the old hag she may go to——" Whither remains a secret. He expired without fully articulating the place of her destination.

But who and what *was* the crone who prophesied the catastrophe? Ay, "that is the mystery of this wonderful history".—Some say it was Dame Fothergill, the late confessor's mamma; others, St. Bridget herself; others thought it was nobody at all, but only a phantom conjured up by conscience. As we do not know, we decline giving an opinion.

And what became of the Clerk of Chatham?—Mr. Simpkinson avers that he lived to a good old age, and was at last hanged by Jack Cade, with his inkhorn about his neck, for "setting boys copies". In support of this he adduces his name "Emmanuel", and refers to the historian Shakspear. Mr. Peters, on the

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contrary, considers this to be what he calls one of Mr. Simpkinson's "Anacreonisms", inasmuch as, at the introduction of Mr. Cade's reform measure, the Clerk, if alive, would have been hard upon two hundred years old. The probability is, that the unfortunate alluded to was his great-grandson.

Margaret Shurland in due course became Margaret Ingoldsby: her portrait still hangs in the gallery at Tappington. The features are handsome, but shrewish, betraying, as it were, a touch of the old gentleman's temperament; but we never could learn that she actually kicked her husband. She brought him a very pretty fortune in chains, owches, and Saracen ear-rings; the barony, being a male fief, reverted to the Crown.

In the abbey-church at Minster may yet be seen the tomb of a recumbent warrior, clad in the chain-mail of the 13th century. His hands are clasped in prayer; his legs, crossed in that position so prized by Templars in ancient, and tailors in modern days, bespeak him a soldier of the faith in Palestine. Close behind his dexter calf lies sculptured in bold relief a horse's head; and a respectable elderly lady, as she shows the monument, fails not to read her auditors a fine moral lesson on the sin of ingratitude, or to claim a sympathizing tear to the memory of poor "Grey Dolphin!"

The Cynotaph

Poor Tray charmant !

Poor Tray de mon Ami !

Dog-bury and Vergers.

[Confound not, I beseech thee, reader, the subject of the following monody with the hapless hero of the tea-urn, Cupid, of "Yow-Yow"-ing memory. Tray was an attached favourite of many years' standing. Most people worth loving have had a friend of this kind; Lord Byron says he "never had but one, and here he (the dog, not the nobleman,) lies !"]

Oh ! where shall I bury my poor dog Tray,
Now his fleeting breath has passed away ?—
Seventeen years, I can venture to say,
Have I seen him gambol, and frolic, and play,
Evermore happy, and frisky, and gay,
As though every one of his months was May,
And the whole of his life one long holiday—
Now he's a lifeless lump of clay,
Oh ! where shall I bury my faithful Tray ?

I am almost tempted to think it hard
That it may not be there, in yon sunny church-
yard,

Where the green willows wave
O'er the peaceful grave,

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Which holds all that once was honest and
brave,
Kind, and courteous, and faithful, and true ;
Qualities, Tray, that were found in you.
But it may not be—yon sacred ground,
By holiest feelings fenced around,
May ne'er within its hallow'd bound
Receive the dust of a soul-less hound.

I would not place him in yonder fane,
Where the mid-day sun through the storied
pane
Throws on the pavement a crimson stain ;
Where the banners of chivalry heavily swing
O'er the pinnacled tomb of the Warrior King,
With helmet and shield, and all that sort of
thing.

No !—come what may,
My gentle Tray
Shan't be an intruder on bluff Harry Tudor,
Or panoplied monarchs yet earlier and ruder,
Whom you see on their backs,
In stone or in wax,
Though the Sacristans now are “ forbidden to
ax ”
For what Mister Hume calls a “ scandalous
tax ” ;
While the Chartists insist they 've a right to go
snacks.—
No !—Tray's humble tomb would look but
shabby
'Mid the sculptured shrines of that gorgeous
Abbey.

THE CYNOTAPH

Besides, in the place

They say there's no space

To bury what wet-nurses call "a Babby".

Even "Rare Ben Jonson", that famous wight,

I am told, is interr'd there bolt upright,

In just such a posture, beneath his bust,

As Tray used to sit in to beg for a crust.

The epitaph, too,

Would scarcely do :

For what could it say, but, "Here lies Tray,

A very good kind of a dog in his day"?

And satirical folks might be apt to imagine it

Meant as a quiz on the House of Plantagenet.

No! no!—The Abbey may do very well

For a feudal "Nob", or poetical "Swell",

"Crusaders", or "Poets", or "Knights of St.

John",

Or Knights of St. John's Wood, who once

went on

To the *Castle of Goode Lorde Eglington*.

Count Fiddle-fumkin, and Lord Fiddle-faddle,

"Sir Craven", "Sir Gael", and "Sir Camp-

bell of Saddell",

(Who, as poor Hook said, when he heard of

the feat,

"Was somehow knock'd out o' his family-

seat :")

The Esquires of the body

To my Lord Tomnoddy ;

"Sir Fairlie", "Sir Lamb",

And the "Knight of the Ram",

The "Knight of the Rose", and the "Knight

of the Dragon",

THE CYNOTAPH

Who, save at the flagon,
And prog in the wagon,
The newspapers tell us did little "to brag
on";

And more, though the Muse knows but little
concerning 'em,
"Sir Hopkins", "Sir Popkins", "Sir Gage",
and "Sir Jerningham",
All *Preux Chevaliers*, in friendly rivalry
Who should best bring back the glory of Chivalry.—

—(Pray be so good, for the sake of my song,
To pronounce here the ante-penultimate long;
Or some hyper-critic will certainly cry,
"The word 'Chivalry' is but a 'rhyme to the
eye'.")

And I own it is clear
A fastidious ear
Will be, more or less, always annoy'd with you
when you insert any rhyme that's not
perfectly genuine.

As to pleasing the "eye",
'T isn't worth while to try,
Since Moore and Tom Campbell themselves
admit "Spinach"

Is perfectly antiphonetic to "Greenwich".)—
But stay!—I say!

Let me pause while I may—
This digression is leading me sadly astray
From my object—A grave for my poor dog
Tray!

THE CYNOTAPH

I would not place him beneath thy walls,
And proud o'ershadowing dome, St. Paul's!
Though I've always consider'd Sir Christopher
Wren,

As an architect, one of the greatest of men;
And,—talking of Epitaphs,—much I admire
his,

“*Circumspice, si Monumentum requiris*”;
Which an erudite Verger translated to me,
“If you ask for his monument, *Sir-come-spy-see!*—”

No!—I should not know where

To place him there;

I would not have him by surly Johnson be;—
Or that queer-looking horse that is rolling on
Ponsonby;—

Or those ugly minxes

The sister Sphynxes,

Mix'd creatures, half lady, half lioness, *ergo*,
(Denon says), the emblems of *Leo* and *Virgo*;
On one of the backs of which singular jumble,
Sir Ralph Abercrombie is going to tumble,
With a thump which alone were enough to
despatch him,

If the Scotchman in front shouldn't happen to
catch him.

No! I'd not have him there,—nor nearer the
door,

Where the man and the Angel have got Sir
John Moore,

And are quietly letting him down through the
floor,

By Gillespie, the one who escaped, at Vellore,

THE CYNOTAPH

Alone from the row ;—
Neither he, nor Lord Howe
Would like to be plagued with a little Bow-
wow.

No, Tray, we must yield,
And go further a-field ;
To lay you by Nelson were downright ef-
front'ry ;—
—We'll be off from the City, and look at the
country.

It shall not be there,
In that sepulchred square,
Where folks are interr'd for the sake of the air,
(Though, pay but the dues, they could hardly
refuse
To Tray what they grant to Thuggs, and Hin-
doos,
Turks, Infidels, Heretics, Jumpers, and Jews,)
Where the tombstones are placed
In the very *best taste*,
At the feet and the head
Of the elegant Dead,
And no one's received who's not "buried in
lead" :
For, there lie the bones of Deputy Jones,
Whom the widow's tears, and the orphan's
groans
Affected as much as they do the stones
His executors laid on the Deputy's bones ;
Little rest, poor knave !
Would Tray have in his grave ;
Since Spirits, 't is plain,
Are sent back again,

THE CYNOTAPH

To roam round their bodies,—the bad ones in
pain,—

Dragging after them sometimes a heavy jack-
chain ;

Whenever they met, alarm'd by its groans, his
Ghost all night long would be barking at
Jones's.

Nor shall he be laid

By that cross Old Maid,

Miss Penelope Bird,—of whom it is said
All the dogs in the parish were ever afraid.

He must not be placed

By one so strait-laced

In her temper, her taste, and her morals, and
waist.

For, 't is said, when she went up to Heaven,
and St. Peter,

Who happened to meet her,

Came forward to greet her,

She purs'd up with scorn every vinegar feature,
And bade him "Get out for a horrid Male
Creature!"

So, the Saint, after looking as if he could eat
her,

Not knowing, perhaps, very well how to treat
her,

And not being willing,—or able,—to beat
her,

Sent her back to her grave till her temper grew
sweeter,

With an epithet—which I decline to repeat
here.

THE CYNOTAPH

No,—if Tray were interr'd
By Penelope Bird,
No dog would be e'er so be—"whelp" 'd and
be—"cur" 'r'd—

All the night long her cantankerous Sprite
Would be running about in the pale moon-
light,
Chasing him round, and attempting to lick
The ghost of poor Tray with the ghost of a
stick.

Stay!—let me see!—
Ay—here it shall be
At the root of this gnarled and time-worn tree,
Where Tray and I
Would often lie,
And watch the bright clouds as they floated by
In the broad expanse of the clear blue sky,
When the sun was bidding the world good
b'ye;
And the plaintive Nightingale, warbling nigh,
Pour'd forth her mournful melody;
While the tender Wood-pigeon's cooing cry
Has made me say to myself, with a sigh,
"How nice you would eat with a steak in a
pie!"

Ay, here it shall be!—far, far from the view
Of the noisy world and its maddening crew.

Simple and few,
Tender and true
The lines o'er his grave.—
They have, some of them, too,
The advantage of being remarkably new.

THE CYNOTAPH

Epitaph

Affliction sore
Long time he bore,
Physicians were in vain !—
Grown blind, alas ! he'd
Some Prussic Acid,
And that put him out of his pain.

THE CYNICAL

By

William
The time is here
- Politics were in vain!
Given blood, and
Some time
And that the kind of his

...

...

...

...

...

...

Mrs. Botherby's Story

THE LEECH OF FOLKESTONE

Hos ego versiculos feci, tulit alter honores.—*Virgil*.

I wrote the lines— . . . owned them—he told stories!

—*Thomas Ingoldsby*.

Reader, were you ever bewitched?—I do not mean by a “white wench’s black eye”, or by love potions imbibed from a ruby lip;—but, were you ever really and *bonâ fide* bewitched, in the true Matthew Hopkins sense of the word? Did you ever, for instance, find yourself from head to heel one vast complication of cramps?—or burst out into sudorific exudation like a cold thaw, with the thermometer at zero?—Were your eyes ever turned upside down, exhibiting nothing but their whites?—Did you ever vomit a paper of crooked pins? or expectorate Whitechapel needles? These are genuine and undoubted marks of possession; and if you never experienced any of them,—why, “happy man be his dole!”

Yet such things have been: yea, we are assured, and that on no mean authority, still are.

The World, according to the best geo-

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graphers, is divided into Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Romney Marsh. In this last-named, and fifth, quarter of the globe, a Witch may still be occasionally discovered in favourable, *i.e.*, stormy, seasons, weathering Dunge-ness Point in an egg-shell, or careering on her broomstick over Dymchurch wall. A cow may yet be sometimes seen galloping like mad, with tail erect, and an old pair of breeches on her horns, an unerring guide to the door of the crone whose magic arts have drained her udder. I do not, however, remember to have heard that any Conjuror has of late been detected in the district.

Not many miles removed from the verge of this recondite region, stands a collection of houses, which its maligners call a fishing-town, and its well-wishers a Watering-place. A limb of one of the Cinque Ports, it has (or lately had) a corporation of its own, and has been thought considerable enough to give a second title to a noble family. Rome stood on seven hills; Folkestone seems to have been built upon seventy. Its streets, lanes, and alleys,—fanciful distinctions without much real difference,—are agreeable enough to persons who do not mind running up and down stairs; and the only inconvenience, at all felt by such of its inhabitants as are not asthmatic, is when some heedless urchin tumbles down a chimney, or an impertinent pedestrian peeps into a garret window.

At the eastern extremity of the town, on the sea-beach, and scarcely above high-water mark,

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stood, in the good old times, a row of houses then denominated "Frog-hole". Modern refinement subsequently euphonized the name into "East-street"; but "what's in a name?"—the encroachments of Ocean have long since levelled all in one common ruin.

Here, in the early part of the seventeenth century, flourished in somewhat doubtful reputation, but comparative opulence, a compounder of medicines, one Master Erasmus Buckthorne; the effluvia of whose drugs from within, mingling agreeably with the "ancient and fish-like smells" from without, wafted a delicious perfume throughout the neighbourhood.

At seven of the clock, on the morning when Mrs. Botherby's narrative commences, a stout Suffolk "punch", about thirteen hands and a half in height, was slowly led up and down before the door of the pharmacopolist by a lean and withered lad, whose appearance warranted an opinion, pretty generally expressed, that his master found him as useful in experimentalizing as in household drudgery; and that, for every pound avoirdupois of solid meat, he swallowed, at the least, two pounds troy-weight of chemicals and galenicals. As the town clock struck the quarter, Master Buckthorne emerged from his laboratory, and, putting the key carefully into his pocket, mounted the surefooted cob aforesaid, and proceeded up and down the acclivities and declivities of the town with the gravity due to his station and profession. When he reached the open country, his pace was increased to a sedate

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canter, which, in somewhat more than half an hour, brought "the horse and his rider" in front of a handsome and substantial mansion, the numerous gable-ends and bayed windows of which bespoke the owner a man of worship, and one well to do in the world.

"How now, Hodge Gardener?" quoth the Leech, scarcely drawing bit; for Punch seemed to be aware that he had reached his destination, and paused of his own accord; "How now, man? How fares thine employer, worthy Master Marsh? How hath he done? How hath he slept? My potion hath done its office? Ha!"

"Alack! ill at ease, worthy sir—ill at ease," returned the hind; "his honour is up and stirring; but he hath rested none, and complaineth that the same gnawing pain devoureth, as it were, his very vitals: in sooth he is ill at ease."

"Morrow, doctor!" interrupted a voice from a casement opening on the lawn. "Good morrow! I have looked for, longed for, thy coming this hour and more; enter at once; the pasty and tankard are impatient for thine attack!"

"Marry, Heaven forbid that I should baulk their fancy!" quoth the Leech *sotto voce*, as, abandoning the bridle to honest Hodge, he dismounted, and followed a buxom-looking handmaiden into the breakfast parlour.

There, at the head of his well-furnished board, sat Master Thomas Marsh, of Marston-hall, a yeoman well respected in his degree:

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one of that sturdy and sterling class which, taking rank immediately below the Esquire (a title in its origin purely military), occupied, in the wealthier counties, the position in society now filled by the Country Gentleman. He was one of those of whom the proverb ran :

“A Knight of Cales,
A Gentleman of Wales,
And a Laird of the North Countree;
A Yeoman of Kent,
With his yearly rent,
Will buy them out all three !”

A cold sirloin, big enough to frighten a Frenchman, filled the place of honour, counter-checked by a game-pie of no stinted dimensions; while a silver flagon of “humming-bub”,—*viz.*, ale strong enough to blow a man's beaver off—smiled opposite in treacherous amenity. The sideboard groaned beneath sundry massive cups and waiters of the purest silver; while the huge skull of a fallow deer, with its branching horns, frowned majestically above. All spoke of affluence, of comfort,—all save the master, whose restless eye and feverish look hinted but too plainly the severest mental or bodily disorder. By the side of the proprietor of the mansion sat his consort, a lady now past the bloom of youth, yet still retaining many of its charms. The clear olive of her complexion, and “the darkness of her Andalusian eye”, at once betrayed her foreign origin; in fact, her “lord and master”, as husbands were even then, by a legal fiction, denominated, had taken her

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to his bosom in a foreign country. The cadet of his family, Master Thomas Marsh, had early in life been engaged in commerce. In the pursuit of his vocation he had visited Antwerp, Hamburg, and most of the Hanse Towns; and had already formed a tender connection with the orphan offspring of one of old Alva's officers, when the unexpected deaths of one immediate, and two presumptive, heirs placed him next in succession to the family acres. He married, and brought home his bride: who, by the decease of the venerable possessor, heart-broken at the loss of his elder children, became eventually lady of Marston-Hall. It has been said that she was beautiful, yet was her beauty of a character that operates on the fancy more than the affections; she was one to be admired rather than loved. The proud curl of her lip, the firmness of her tread, her arched brow and stately carriage, showed the decision, not to say haughtiness, of her soul; while her glances, whether lightening with anger, or melting in extreme softness, betrayed the existence of passions as intense in kind as opposite in quality. She rose as Erasmus entered the parlour, and, bestowing on him a look fraught with meaning, quitted the room, leaving him in unrestrained communication with his patient.

“'Fore George, Master Buckthorne!” exclaimed the latter, as the Leech drew near, “I will no more of your pharmacy;—burn, burn, gnaw, gnaw,—I had as lief the foul fiend were in my gizzard as one of your drugs.

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Tell me in the devil's name, what is the matter with me!"

Thus conjured, the practitioner paused, and even turned somewhat pale. There was a perceptible faltering in his voice, as, evading the question, he asked, "What say your other physicians?"

"Doctor Phiz says it is wind,—Doctor Fuz says it is water;—and Doctor Buz says it is something between wind and water."

"They are all of them wrong," said Erasmus Buckthorne.

"Truly, I think so," returned the patient. "They are manifest asses; but you, good Leech, you are a horse of another colour. The world talks loudly of your learning, your skill, and cunning in arts the most abstruse; nay, sooth to say, some look coldly on you therefore, and stickle not to aver that you are cater-cousin with Beelzebub himself."

"It is ever the fate of science," murmured the professor, "to be maligned by the ignorant and superstitious. But a truce with such folly; let me examine your palate."

Master Marsh thrust out a tongue long, clear, and red as beetroot. "There is nothing wrong there," said the Leech. "Your wrist;—no;—the pulse is firm and regular, the skin cool and temperate. Sir, there is nothing the matter with you!"

"Nothing the matter with me, Sir 'Potecary?—But I tell you there is the matter with me,—much the matter with me. Why is it that something seems ever gnawing at my heart-

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strings?—Whence this pain in the region of the liver?—Why is it that I sleep not o' nights, —rest not o' days? Why——”

“You are fidgety, Master Marsh,” said the doctor.

Master Marsh's brow grew dark: he half rose from his seat, supported himself by both hands on the arms of his elbow-chair, and in accents of mingled anger and astonishment repeated the word “Fidgety!”

“Ay, fidgety,” returned the doctor calmly. “Tut, man, there is naught ails thee save thine own overweening fancies. Take less of food, more air, put aside thy flagon, call for thy horse; be boot and saddle the word! Why, hast thou not youth?——”

“I have,” said the patient.

“Wealth and a fair domain?”

“Granted,” quoth Marsh cheerily.

“And a fair wife?”

“Yea,” was the response, but in a tone something less satisfied.

“Then arouse thee, man, shake off this fantasy, betake thyself to thy lawful occasions, —use thy good hap,—follow thy pleasures, and think no more of these fancied ailments.”

“But I tell you, master mine, these ailments are not fancied. I lose my rest, I loathe my food, my doublet sits loosely on me,—these racking pains. My wife, too, when I meet her gaze, the cold sweat stands on my forehead, and I could almost think——” Marsh paused abruptly, mused awhile, then added, looking steadily at his visitor, “These things are not

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right; they pass the common, Master Erasmus Buckthorne."

A slight shade crossed the brow of the Leech, but its passage was momentary; his features softened to a smile, in which pity seemed slightly blended with contempt. "Have done with such follies, Master Marsh. You are well, and you would but think so. Ride, I say, hunt, shoot, do anything,—disperse these melancholic humours, and become yourself again."

"Well, I will do your bidding," said Marsh, thoughtfully. "It may be so; and yet,—but I will do your bidding. Master Cobbe of Brenzet writes me that he hath a score or two of fat ewes to be sold a pennyworth; I had thought to have sent Ralph Looker, but I will essay to go myself. Ho, there!—saddle me the brown mare, and bid Ralph be ready to attend me on the gelding."

An expression of pain contracted the features of Master Marsh as he rose and slowly quitted the apartment to prepare for his journey; while the Leech, having bidden him farewell, vanished through an opposite door, and betook himself to the private boudoir of the fair Mrs. Marston, muttering as he went a quotation from a then newly-published play,

"Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou own'dst yesterday."

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Of what passed at this interview between the Folkestone doctor and the fair Spaniard, Mrs. Botherby declares she could never obtain any satisfactory elucidation. Not that tradition is silent on the subject,—quite the contrary; it is the abundance, not paucity, of the materials she supplies, and the consequent embarrassment of selection, that makes the difficulty. Some have averred that the Leech, whose character, as has been before hinted, was more than threadbare, employed his time in teaching her the mode of administering certain noxious compounds, the unconscious partaker whereof would pine and die so slowly and gradually as to defy suspicion. Others there were who affirmed that Lucifer himself was then and there raised *in propria personâ*, with all his terrible attributes of horn and hoof. In support of this assertion, they adduce the testimony of the aforesaid buxom housemaid, who protested that the hall smelt that evening like a manufactory of matches. All, however, seemed to agree that the confabulation, whether human or infernal, was conducted with profound secrecy, and protracted to a considerable length; that its object, as far as could be divined, meant anything but good to the head of the family: that the lady, moreover, was heartily tired of her husband; and that, in the event of his removal by disease or casualty, Master Erasmus Buckthorne, albeit a great philosopher, would have no violent objection to “throw physic to the dogs”, and exchange his laboratory for the estate of Marston, its live stock

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included. Some, too, have inferred that to him did Madame Isabel seriously incline; while others have thought, induced perhaps by subsequent events, that she was merely using him for her purposes; that one José, a tall, bright-eyed, hook-nosed stripling from her native land, was a personage not unlikely to put a spoke in the doctor's wheel; and that, should such a chance arise, the Sage, wise as he was, would, after all, run no slight risk of being "bamboozled".

Master José was a youth well-favoured, and comely to look upon. His office was that of page to the dame; an office which, after long remaining in abeyance, has been of late years revived, as may well be seen in the persons of sundry smart hobbledehoyes, now constantly to be met with on staircases and in boudoirs, clad, for the most part, in garments fitted tightly to the shape, the lower moiety adorned with a broad strip of crimson or silver lace, and the upper with what the first Wit of our times has described as "a favourable eruption of buttons". The precise duties of this employment have never, as far as we have heard, been accurately defined. The perfuming a handkerchief, the combing a lap-dog, and the occasional presentation of a sippet-shaped *billet doux*, are, and always have been, among them; but these a young gentleman standing five foot ten, and aged nineteen "last grass", might well be supposed to have outgrown. José, however, kept his place, perhaps because he was not fit for any other. To the conference be-

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tween his mistress and the physician he had not been admitted; his post was to keep watch and ward in the ante-room; and, when the interview was concluded, he attended the lady and her visitor as far as the courtyard, where he held, with all due respect, the stirrup for the latter, as he once more resumed his position on the back of Punch.

Who is it that says, "little pitchers have large ears"? Some deep metaphysician of the potteries, who might have added that they have also quick eyes, and sometimes silent tongues. There was a little metaphorical piece of crockery of this class, who, screened by a huge elbow-chair, had sat a quiet and unobserved spectator of the whole proceedings between her mamma and Master Erasmus Buckthorne. This was Miss Marian Marsh, a rosy-cheeked laughter-loving imp of some six years old; but one who could be mute as a mouse when the fit was on her. A handsome and highly-polished cabinet of the darkest ebony occupied a recess at one end of the apartment; this had long been a great subject of speculation to little Miss. Her curiosity, however, had always been repelled; nor had all her coaxing ever won her an inspection of the thousand and one pretty things which its recesses no doubt contained. On this occasion it was unlocked, and Marian was about to rush forward in eager anticipation of a peep at its interior, when, child as she was, the reflection struck her that she would stand a better chance of carrying her point by remaining *perdue*. Fortune for once favoured her; she

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crouched closer than before, and saw her mother take something from one of the drawers, which she handed over to the Leech. Strange mutterings followed, and words whose sound was foreign to her youthful ears. Had she been older, their import, perhaps, might have been equally unknown. After a while there was a pause; and then the lady, as in answer to a requisition from the gentleman, placed in his hand a something which she took from her toilet. The transaction, whatever its nature, seemed now to be complete, and the article was carefully replaced in the drawer from which it had been taken. A long, and apparently interesting, conversation then took place between the parties, carried on in a low tone. At its termination, Mistress Marsh and Master Erasmus Buckthorne quitted the boudoir together. But the cabinet!—ay, that was left unfastened; the folding-doors still remained invitingly expanded, the bunch of keys dangling from the lock. In an instant the spoiled child was in a chair; the drawer, so recently closed, yielded at once to her hand, and her hurried researches were rewarded by the prettiest little waxen doll imaginable. It was a first-rate prize, and Miss lost no time in appropriating it to herself. Long before Madame Marsh had returned to her *Sanctum*, Marian was seated under a lares-tinus in the garden, nursing her new baby with the most affectionate solicitude.

“Susan, look here; see what a nasty scratch I have got upon my hand,” said the young

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lady, when routed out at length from her hiding-place to her noontide meal.

"Yes, Miss, this is always the way with you! mend, mend, mend,—nothing but mend! Scrambling about among the bushes, and tearing your clothes to rags. What with you, and with madam's farthingales and kirtles, a poor bower-maiden has a fine time of it!"

"But I have not torn my clothes, Susan, and it was not the bushes; it was the doll: only see what a great ugly pin I have pulled out of it! and look, here is another!" As she spoke, Marian drew forth one of those extended pieces of black pointed wire, with which, in the days of toupees and pompoons, our fore-mothers were wont to secure their fly-caps and head-gear from the impertinent assaults of "Zephyrus and the Little Breezes".

"And pray, Miss, where did you get this pretty doll, as you call it?" asked Susan, turning over the puppet, and viewing it with a scrutinizing eye.

"Mamma gave it me," said the child.—"This was a fib!"

"Indeed!" quoth the girl thoughtfully; and then, in half soliloquy, and a lower key, "Well! I wish I may die if it doesn't look like master! —But come to your dinner, Miss! Hark! the *bell is striking One!*"

Meanwhile Master Thomas Marsh and his man Ralph were threading the devious paths, then, as now, most pseudonymously dignified with the name of roads, that wound between Marston Hall and the frontier of Romney

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Marsh. Their progress was comparatively slow; for though the brown mare was as good a roadster as man might back, and the gelding no mean nag of his hands, yet the tracts, rarely traversed save by the rude wains of the day, miry in the "bottoms", and covered with loose and rolling stones on the higher grounds, rendered barely passable the perpetual alternation of hill and valley.

The master rode on in pain, and the man in listlessness; although the intercourse between two individuals so situated was much less restrained in those days than might suit the refinement of a later age, little passed approximating to conversation beyond an occasional and half-stifled groan from the one, or a vacant whistle from the other. An hour's riding had brought them among the woods of Acryse; and they were about to descend one of those green and leafy lanes, rendered by matted and over-arching branches alike impervious to shower or sunbeam, when a sudden and violent spasm seized on Master Marsh, and nearly caused him to fall from his horse. With some difficulty he succeeded in dismounting, and seating himself by the road side. Here he remained for a full half-hour in great apparent agony; the cold sweat rolled in large round drops adown his clammy forehead, a universal shivering palsied every limb, his eye-balls appeared to be starting from their sockets, and to his attached, though dull and heavy serving-man, he seemed as one struggling in the pangs of impending dissolution. His groans rose thick

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and frequent ; and the alarmed Ralph was hesitating between his disinclination to leave him, and his desire to procure such assistance as one of the few cottages, rarely sprinkled in that wild country, might afford, when, after a long-drawn sigh, his master's features as suddenly relaxed ; he declared himself better, the pang had passed away, and, to use his own expression, he " felt as if a knife had been drawn from out his very heart ". With Ralph's assistance, after a while, he again reached his saddle ; and though still ill at ease, from a deep-seated and gnawing pain, which ceased not, as he averred, to torment him, the violence of the paroxysm was spent, and it returned no more.

Master and man pursued their way with increased speed, as, emerging from the wooded defiles, they at length neared the coast ; then, leaving the romantic castle of Saltwood, with its neighbouring town of Hithe, a little on their left, they proceeded along the ancient paved causeway, and, crossing the old Roman road, or Watling, plunged again into the woods that stretched between Lympe and Ostenhanger.

The sun rode high in the heavens, and its meridian blaze was powerfully felt by man and horse, when, again quitting their leafy covert, the travellers debouched on the open plain of Aldington Frith, a wide tract of unenclosed country stretching down to the very borders of " the Marsh " itself.

Here it was, in the neighbouring chapelry, the site of which may yet be traced by the

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curious antiquary, that Elizabeth Barton, the "Holy Maid of Kent", had, something less than a hundred years previous to the period of our narrative, commenced that series of supernatural pranks which eventually procured for her head an unenvied elevation upon London Bridge; and though the parish had since enjoyed the benefit of the incumbency of Master Erasmus's illustrious and enlightened Name-sake, still, truth to tell, some of the old leaven was even yet supposed to be at work. The place had, in fact, an ill name; and, though Popish miracles had ceased to electrify its denizens, spells and charms, operating by a no less wondrous agency, were said to have taken their place. Warlocks, and other unholy subjects of Satan, were reported to make its wild recesses their favourite rendezvous, and that to an extent which eventually attracted the notice of no less a personage than the sagacious Matthew Hopkins himself, Witchfinder-General to the British Government.

A great portion of the Frith, or Fright, as the name was then, and is still, pronounced, had formerly been a Chase, with rights of Free-warren, etc., appertaining to the Archbishops of the Province. Since the Reformation, however, it had been disparked; and when Master Thomas Marsh and his man Ralph entered upon its confines, the open greensward exhibited a lively scene, sufficiently explanatory of certain sounds that had already reached their ears while yet within the sylvan screen which concealed their origin.

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It was Fair-day : booths, stalls, and all the rude *paraphernalia* of an assembly that then met as much for the purposes of traffic as festivity, were scattered irregularly over the turf; pedlars, with their packs, horse-coupers, pig-merchants, itinerant vendors of crockery and cutlery, wandered promiscuously among the mingled groups, exposing their several wares and commodities, and soliciting custom. On one side was the gaudy riband, making its mute appeal to rustic gallantry; on the other the delicious brandy-ball and alluring lollipop, compounded after the most approved receipt in the "True Gentlewoman's Garland", and "raising the waters" in the mouth of many an expectant urchin.

Nor were rural sports wanting to those whom pleasure, rather than business, had drawn from their humble homes. Here was the tall and slippery pole, glittering in its grease, and crowned with the ample cheese, that mocked the hopes of the discomfited climber. There the fugitive pippin, swimming in water not of the purest, and bobbing from the expanded lips of the juvenile Tantalus. In this quarter the ear was pierced by squeaks from some beleaguered porker, whisking his well-soaped tail from the grasp of one already in fancy his captor. In that, the eye rested, with undisguised delight, upon the grimaces of grinning candidates for the honours of the horse-collar. All was fun, frolic, courtship, junketting, and jollity.

Maid Marian, indeed, with her lieges, Robin

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Hood, Scarlet, and Little John, was wanting; Friar Tuck was absent; even the Hobby-horse had disappeared; but the agile Morris-dancers yet were there, and jingled their bells merrily among stalls well stored with gingerbread, tops, whips, whistles, and all those noisy instruments of domestic torture in which scenes like these are even now so fertile.—Had I a foe whom I held at deadliest feud, I would entice his favourite child to a Fair, and buy him a Whistle and a Penny-trumpet.

In one corner of the green, a little apart from the thickest of the throng, stood a small square stage, nearly level with the chins of the spectators, whose repeated bursts of laughter seemed to intimate the presence of something more than usually amusing. The platform was divided into two unequal portions; the smaller of which, surrounded by curtains of a coarse canvass, veiled from the eyes of the profane the *penetralia* of this moveable temple of Esculapius, for such it was. Within its interior, and secure from vulgar curiosity, the Quack-salver had hitherto kept himself ensconced; occupied, no doubt, in the preparation and arrangement of that wonderful *panacea* which was hereafter to shed the blessings of health among the admiring crowd. Meanwhile his attendant Jack-pudding was busily employed on the *proscenium*, doing his best to attract attention by a practical facetiousness which took wonderfully with the spectators, interspersing it with the melodious notes of a huge cow's horn. The fellow's costume

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varied but little in character from that in which the late (alas! that we should have to write the word—late!) Mr. Joseph Grimaldi was accustomed to present himself before “a generous and enlightened public”: the principal difference consisted in this, that the upper garment was a long white tunic of a coarse linen, surmounted by a caricature of the ruff then fast falling into disuse, and was secured from the throat downwards by a single row of broad white metal buttons; and his legs were cased in loose wide trousers of the same material; while his sleeves, prolonged to a most disproportionate extent, descended far below the fingers, and acted as flappers in the somersets and caracoles, with which he diversified and enlivened his antics. Consummate impudence, not altogether unmixed with a certain sly humour, sparkled in his eye through the chalk and ochre with which his features were plentifully bedaubed; and especially displayed itself in a succession of jokes, the coarseness of which did not seem to detract from their merit in the eyes of his applauding audience.

He was in the midst of a long and animated harangue explanatory of his master's high pretensions; he had informed his gaping auditors that the latter was the seventh son of a seventh son, and of course, as they very well knew, an Unborn Doctor; that to this happy accident of birth he added the advantage of most extensive travel; that in his search after science he had not only perambulated the whole of this

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world, but had trespassed on the boundaries of the next: that the depths of the Ocean and the bowels of the Earth were alike familiar to him; that besides salves and cataplasms of sovereign virtue, by combining sundry mosses, gathered many thousand fathoms below the surface of the sea, with certain unknown drugs, found in an undiscovered island, and boiling the whole in the lava of Vesuvius, he had succeeded in producing his celebrated balsam of Crackapanoko, the never-failing remedy for all human disorders, and which, a proper trial allowed, would go near to reanimate the dead. "Draw near!" continued the worthy, "draw near, my masters! and you, my good mistresses, draw near, every one of you. Fear not high and haughty carriage: though greater than King or Kaiser, yet is the mighty Aldrovando milder than mother's milk; flint to the proud, to the humble he is as melting wax; he asks not your disorders, he sees them himself at a glance—nay, without a glance; he tells your ailments with his eyes shut!—Draw near! draw near! the more incurable the better! List to the illustrious Doctor Aldrovando, first physician to Prester John, Leech to the Grand Llama, and Hakim in Ordinary to Mustapha Muley Bey!"

"Hath your master ever a charm for the toothache, an't please you?" asked an elderly countryman, whose swollen cheek bespoke his interest in the question.

"A charm!—a thousand, and every one of them infallible. Toothache, quotha! I had

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hoped you had come with every bone in your body fractured or out of joint. A toothache!—propound a tester, master o' mine—we ask not more for such trifles: do my bidding, and thy jaws, even with the word, shall cease to trouble thee!”

The clown, fumbling awhile in a deep leathern purse, at length produced a sixpence, which he tendered to the jester. “Now to thy master, and bring me the charm forthwith.”

“Nay, honest man; to disturb the mighty Aldroyando on such slight occasion were pity of my life: areed my counsel aright, and I will warrant thee for the nonce. Hie thee home, friend; infuse this powder in cold spring-water, fill thy mouth with the mixture, and sit upon thy fire till it boils!”

“Out on thee for a pestilent knave!” cried the cozened countryman; but the roar of merriment around bespoke the bystanders well-pleased with the jape put upon him. He retired, venting his spleen in audible murmurs; and the mountebank, finding the feelings of the mob enlisted on his side, waxed more impudent every instant, filling up the intervals between his fooleries with sundry capers and contortions, and discordant notes from the cow's horn.

“Draw near, draw near, my masters! Here have ye a remedy for every evil under the sun, moral, physical, natural, and supernatural! Hath any man a termagant wife?—here is that will tame her presently! Hath any one a

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smoky chimney?—here is an incontinent cure!”

To the first infliction no man ventured to plead guilty, though there were those standing by who thought their neighbours might have profited withal. For the last-named recipe started forth at least a dozen candidates. With the greatest gravity imaginable, Pierrot, having pocketed their groats, delivered to each a small packet curiously folded and closely sealed, containing, as he averred, directions which, if truly observed, would preclude any chimney from smoking for a whole year. They whose curiosity led them to dive into the mystery, found that a sprig of mountain ash sculled by moonlight was the charm recommended, coupled, however, with the proviso that no fire should be lighted on the hearth during its exercise.

The frequent bursts of merriment proceeding from this quarter at length attracted the attention of Master Marsh, whose line of road necessarily brought him near this end of the fair; he drew bit in front of the stage just as its noisy occupant, having laid aside his formidable horn, was drawing still more largely on the amazement of “the public” by a feat of especial wonder,—he was eating fire! Curiosity mingled with astonishment was at its height; and feelings not unallied to alarm were beginning to manifest themselves, among the softer sex especially, as they gazed on the flames that issued from the mouth of the living volcano. All eyes, indeed, were fixed upon the

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fire-eater with an intentness that left no room for observing another worthy who had now emerged upon the scene. This was, however, no less a personage than the *Deus ex machinâ*,—the illustrious Aldrovando himself.

Short in stature and spare in form, the sage had somewhat increased the former by a steeple-crowned hat adorned with a cock's feather; while the thick shoulder-padding of a quilted doublet, surmounted by a falling band, added a little to his personal importance in point of breadth. His habit was composed throughout of black serge, relieved with scarlet slashes in the sleeves and trunks; red was the feather in his hat, red were the roses in his shoes, which rejoiced moreover in a pair of red heels. The lining of a short cloak of faded velvet, that hung transversely over his left shoulder, was also red. Indeed, from all that we could ever see or hear, this agreeable alternation of red and black appears to be the mixture of colours most approved at the court of Beelzebub, and the one most generally adopted by his friends and favourites. His features were sharp and shrewd, and a fire sparkled in his keen grey eye, much at variance with the wrinkles that ran their irregular furrows above his prominent and bushy brows. He had advanced slowly from behind his screen while the attention of the multitude was absorbed by the pyrotechnics of Mr. Merryman, and, stationing himself at the extreme corner of the stage, stood quietly leaning on a crutch-handle walking-staff of blackest

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ebony, his glance steadily fixed on the face of Marsh, from whose countenance the amusement he had insensibly begun to derive had not succeeded in removing all traces of bodily pain.

For a while the latter was unobservant of the inquisitorial survey with which he was regarded; the eyes of the parties, however, at length met. The brown mare had a fine shoulder; she stood pretty nearly sixteen hands. Marsh himself, though slightly bowed by ill-health and the "coming autumn" of life, was full six feet in height. His elevation giving him an unobstructed view over the heads of the pedestrians, he had naturally fallen into the rear of the assembly, which brought him close to the diminutive Doctor, with whose face, despite the red heels, his own was about upon a level.

"And what makes Master Marsh here? what sees he in the mummeries of a miserable buffoon to divert him when his life is in jeopardy?" said a shrill cracked voice that sounded as in his very ear. It was the Doctor who spoke.

"Knowest thou me, friend?" said Marsh, scanning with awakened interest the figure of his questioner: "I call thee not to mind; and yet—stay, where have we met?"

"It skills not to declare," was the answer; "suffice it we *have* met—in other climes perchance—and now meet happily again—happily at least for thee."

"Why truly the trick of thy countenance reminds me of somewhat I have seen before;

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where or when I know not: but what wouldst thou with me?"

"Nay, rather what wouldst thou here, Thomas Marsh? What wouldst thou on the Frith of Aldington? Is it a score or two of paltry sheep? or is it something *nearer to thy heart?*"

Marsh started as the last words were pronounced with more than common significance: a pang shot through him at the moment, and the vinegar aspect of the charlatan seemed to relax into a smile half compassionate, half sardonic.

"Grammercy," quoth Marsh, after a long-drawn breath, "what knowest thou of me, fellow, or of my concerns? What knowest thou——"

"This know I, Master Thomas Marsh," said the stranger, gravely, "that thy life is even now perilled, evil practices are against thee; but no matter, thou art quit for the nonce—other hands than mine have saved thee! Thy pains are over. Hark! *the clock strikes One!*" As he spoke, a single toll from the bell-tower of Bilsington came, wafted by the western breeze, over the thick-set and lofty oaks which intervened between the Frith and what had been once a priory. Doctor Aldrovando turned as the sound came floating on the wind, and was moving, as if half in anger, towards the other side of the stage, where the mountebank, his fires extinct, was now disgorging to the admiring crowd yard after yard of gaudy-coloured riband.

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“Stay! Nay, prithee stay!” cried Marsh eagerly, “I was wrong; in faith I was. A change, and that a sudden and most marvellous, hath indeed come over me; I am free; I breathe again; I feel as though a load of years had been removed; and, is it possible?—hast thou done this?”

“Thomas Marsh!” said the Doctor, pausing, and turning for the moment on his heel; “I have *not*: I repeat, that other and more innocent hands than mine have done this deed. Nevertheless, heed my counsel well! Thou art parlously encompassed; I, and I only, have the means of relieving thee. Follow thy courses; pursue thy journey; but as thou valuest life and more than life, be at the foot of yonder woody knoll what time the rising moon throws her first beam upon the bare and blighted summit that towers above its trees.”

He crossed abruptly to the opposite quarter of the scaffolding, and was in an instant deeply engaged in listening to those whom the cow’s horn had attracted, and in prescribing for their real or fancied ailments. Vain were all Marsh’s efforts again to attract his notice; it was evident that he studiously avoided him; and when, after an hour or more spent in useless endeavour, he saw the object of his anxiety seclude himself once more within his canvass screen, he rode slowly and thoughtfully off the field.

What should he do? Was the man a mere quack? an impostor? His name thus obtained?—that might be easily done. But then, his

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secret griefs: the Doctor's knowledge of them; their cure; for he felt that his pains were gone, his healthful feelings restored!

True, Aldrovando, if that were his name, had disclaimed all co-operation in his recovery; but he knew, or he at least announced it. Nay, more; he had hinted that he was yet in jeopardy; that practices—and the chord sounded strangely in unison with one that had before vibrated within him—that practices were in operation against his life! It was enough! He would keep tryst with the Conjuror, if conjuror he were; and, at least, ascertain who and what he was, and how he had become acquainted with his own person and secret afflictions.

When the late Mr. Pitt was determined to keep out Bonaparte, and prevent his gaining a settlement in the county of Kent, among other ingenious devices adopted for that purpose, he caused to be constructed what was then, and has ever since been conventionally termed a "Military Canal". This is a not very practicable ditch, some thirty feet wide, and nearly nine feet deep, in the middle, extending from the town and port of Hithe to within a mile of the town and port of Rye, a distance of about twenty miles; and forming, as it were, the cord of a bow, the arc of which constitutes that remote fifth quarter of the globe spoken of by travellers. Trivial objections to the plan were made at the time by cavillers; and an old gentleman of the neighbourhood, who proposed as a cheap substitute, to put down his own cocked-hat upon a pole, was deservedly poo-

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pooh'd down; in fact, the job, though rather an expensive one, was found to answer remarkably well. The French managed, indeed, to scramble over the Rhine, and the Rhone, and other insignificant currents, but they never did, or could, pass Mr. Pitt's "Military Canal". At no great distance from the centre of this cord rises abruptly a sort of woody promontory, in shape almost conical; its sides covered with thick underwood, above which is seen a bare and brown summit rising like an Alp in miniature. The "defence of the nation" not being then in existence, Master Marsh met with no obstruction in reaching this place of appointment long before the time prescribed.

So much, indeed, was his mind occupied by his adventure and extraordinary cure, that his original design had been abandoned, and Master Cobbe remained unvisited. A rude hostel in the neighbourhood furnished entertainment for man and horse; and here, a full hour before the rising of the moon, he left Ralph and the other beasts, proceeding to his rendezvous on foot and alone.

"You are punctual, Master Marsh," squeaked the shrill voice of the Doctor, issuing from the thicket as the first silvery gleam trembled on the aspens above. "'Tis well: now follow me, and in silence."

The first part of the command Marsh hesitated not to obey; the second was more difficult of observance.

"Who and what are you? Whither are you leading me?" burst not unnaturally from his

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lips ; but all question was at once cut short by the peremptory tones of his guide.

“Hush ! I say ; your finger on your lip, there be hawks abroad ; follow me, and that silently and quickly.” The little man turned as he spoke, and led the way through a scarcely perceptible path, or track, which wound among the underwood. The lapse of a few minutes brought them to the door of a low building, so hidden by the surrounding trees that few would have suspected its existence. It was a cottage of rather extraordinary dimensions, but consisting of only one floor. No smoke rose from its solitary chimney ; no cheering ray streamed from its single window, which was, however, secured by a shutter of such thickness as to preclude the possibility of any stray beam issuing from within. The exact size of the building it was, in that uncertain light, difficult to distinguish, a portion of it seeming buried in the wood behind. The door gave way on the application of a key, and Marsh followed his conductor resolutely, but cautiously, along a narrow passage, feebly lighted by a small taper that winked and twinkled at its farther extremity. The Doctor, as he approached, raised it from the ground, and, opening an adjoining door, ushered his guest into the room beyond.

It was a large and oddly furnished apartment, insufficiently lighted by an iron lamp that hung from the roof, and scarcely illumined the walls and angles, which seemed to be composed of some dark-coloured wood. On one side, however, Master Marsh could discover an

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article bearing strong resemblance to a coffin; on the other was a large oval mirror in an ebony frame, and in the midst of the floor was described, in red chalk, a double circle, about six feet in diameter, its inner verge inscribed with sundry hieroglyphics, agreeably relieved at intervals with an alternation of skulls and cross-bones. In the very centre was deposited one skull of such surpassing size and thickness as would have filled the soul of a Spurzheim or De Ville with wonderment. A large book, a naked sword, an hour-glass, a chafing-dish, and a black cat, completed the list of moveables; with the exception of a couple of tapers which stood on each side of the mirror, and which the strange gentleman now proceeded to light from the one in his hand. As they flared up with what Marsh thought a most unnatural brilliancy, he perceived, reflected in the glass behind, a dial suspended over the coffin-like article already mentioned: the hand was fast verging towards the hour of nine. The eyes of the little Doctor seemed rivetted on the horologe.

“Now strip thee, Master Marsh, and that quickly: untruss, I say! discard thy boots, doff doublet and hose, and place thyself incontinent in yonder bath.”

The visitor cast his eyes again upon the formidable-looking article, and perceived that it was nearly filled with water. A cold bath, at such an hour and under such auspices, was anything but inviting: he hesitated, and turned his eyes alternately on the Doctor and the Black Cat.

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"Trifle not the time, man, an you be wise," said the former. "Passion of my heart! let but yon minute-hand reach the hour, and thou not immersed, thy life were not worth a pin's fee!"

The Black Cat gave vent to a single mew,—a most unnatural sound for a mouser,—it seemed as it were mewed through a cow's horn.

"Quick, Master Marsh! uncase, or you perish!" repeated his strange host, throwing as he spoke a handful of some dingy-looking powders into the brazier. "Behold, the attack is begun!" A thick cloud rose from the embers; a cold shivering shook the astonished Yeoman; sharp pricking pains penetrated his ankles and the palms of his hands, and, as the smoke cleared away, he distinctly saw and recognised in the mirror the boudoir of Marston Hall.

The doors of the well-known ebony cabinet were closed; but fixed against them, and standing out in strong relief from the contrast afforded by the sable background, was a waxen image—of himself! It appeared to be secured, and sustained in an upright posture, by large black pins driven through the feet and palms, the latter of which were extended in a cruciform position. To the right and left stood his wife and José; in the middle, with his back towards him, was a figure which he had no difficulty in recognising as that of the Leech of Folkestone. The latter had just succeeded in fastening the dexter hand of the image, and was now in the act of drawing a broad and keen-edged sabre from its sheath. The Black Cat mewed again.

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"Haste, or you die!" said the Doctor,—Marsh looked at the dial; it wanted but four minutes of nine: he felt that the crisis of his fate was come. Off went his heavy boots; doublet to the right, galligaskins to the left; never was man more swiftly disrobed. In two minutes, to use an Indian expression, "he was all face!" in another he was on his back, and up to his chin, in a bath which smelt strongly as of brimstone and garlic.

"Heed well the clock!" cried the Conjuror; "with the first stroke of Nine plunge thy head beneath the water, suffer not a hair above the surface: plunge deeply, or thou art lost!"

The little man had seated himself in the centre of the circle upon the large skull, elevating his legs at an angle of forty-five degrees. In this position he spun round with a velocity to be equalled only by that of a tee-totum, the red roses on his insteps seeming to describe a circle of fire. The best buckskins that ever mounted at Melton had soon yielded to such rotatory friction—but he spun on—the Cat mewed, bats and obscene birds fluttered overhead; Erasmus was seen to raise his weapon, the clock struck!—and Marsh, who had "ducked" at the instant, popped up his head again, spitting and sputtering, half-choked with the infernal solution, which had insinuated itself into his mouth, and ears, and nose. All disgust at his nauseous dip, was, however, at once removed, when, casting his eyes on the glass, he saw the consternation of the party whose persons it exhibited. Erasmus had

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evidently made his blow and failed; the figure was unmutated; the hilt remained in the hand of the striker, while the shivered blade lay in shining fragments on the floor.

The Conjuror ceased his spinning, and brought himself to an anchor; the Black Cat purred,—its purring seemed strangely mixed with the self-satisfied chuckle of a human being. Where had Marsh heard something like it before?

He was rising from his unsavoury couch, when a motion from the little man checked him. “Rest where you are, Thomas Marsh; so far all goes well, but the danger is not yet over!” He looked again, and perceived that the shadowy triumvirate were in deep and eager consultation; the fragments of the shattered weapon appeared to undergo a close scrutiny. The result was clearly unsatisfactory: the lips of the parties moved rapidly, and much gesticulation might be observed, but no sound fell upon the ear. The hand of the dial had nearly reached the quarter: at once the parties separated: and Buckthorne stood again before the figure, his hand armed with a long and sharp-pointed *misericorde*, a dagger little in use of late, but such as, a century before, often performed the part of a modern oyster-knife, in tickling the osteology of a dismounted cavalier through the shelly defences of his plate armour. Again he raised his arm. “Duck!” roared the Doctor, spinning away upon his cephalic pivot:—the Black Cat cocked his tail, and seemed to mew the word “Duck!”

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Down went Master Marsh's head;—one of his hands had unluckily been resting on the edge of the bath: he drew it hastily in, but not altogether scatheless; the stump of a rusty nail, projecting from the margin of the bath, had caught and slightly grazed it. The pain was more acute than is usually produced by such trivial accidents; and Marsh, on once more raising his head, beheld the dagger of the Leech sticking in the little finger of the wax figure, which it had seemingly nailed to the cabinet door.

“By my truly, a scape o’ the narrowest!” quoth the Conjuror: “the next course, dive you not the readier, there is no more life in you than in a pickled herring. What! courage, Master Marsh; but be heedful; an they miss again, let them bide the issue!”

He drew his hand athwart his brow as he spoke, and dashed off the perspiration, which the violence of his exercise had drawn from every pore. Black Tom sprang upon the edge of the bath, and stared full in the face of the bather: his sea-green eyes were lambent with unholy fire, but their marvellous obliquity of vision was not to be mistaken;—the very countenance, too! Could it be?—the features were feline, but their expression was that of the Jack-pudding! Was the mountebank a cat?—or the cat a mountebank?—it was all a mystery;—and Heaven knows how long Marsh might have continued staring at Grimalkin, had not his attention been again called by Aldrovando to the magic mirror.

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Great dissatisfaction, not to say dismay, seemed now to pervade the conspirators; Dame Isabel was closely inspecting the figure's wounded hand, while José was aiding the pharmacopolist to charge a huge petronel with powder and bullets. The load was a heavy one; but Erasmus seemed determined this time to make sure of his object. Somewhat of trepidation might be observed in his manner as he rammed down the balls, and his withered cheek appeared to have acquired an increase of paleness; but amazement rather than fear was the prevailing symptom, and his countenance betrayed no jot of irresolution. As the clock was about to chime half-past nine, he planted himself with a firm foot in front of the image, waved his unoccupied hand with a cautionary gesture to his companions, and, as they hastily retired on either side, brought the muzzle of his weapon within half a foot of his mark. As the shadowy form was about to draw the trigger, Marsh again plunged his head beneath the surface; and the sound of an explosion, as of fire-arms, mingled with the rush of water that poured into his ears. His immersion was but momentary, yet did he feel as though half suffocated: he sprang from the bath, and, as his eye fell on the mirror, he saw,—or thought he saw,—the Leech of Folkestone lying dead on the floor of his wife's boudoir, his head shattered to pieces, and his hand still grasping the stock of a bursten petronel.

He saw no more; his head swam; his senses reeled, the whole room was turning round,

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and, as he fell to the ground, the last impressions to which he was conscious were the chucklings of a hoarse laughter, and the mewings of a tom cat!

Master Marsh was found the next morning by his bewildered serving-man, stretched before the door of the humble hostel at which he sojourned. His clothes were somewhat torn and much bemired; and deeply did honest Ralph marvel that one so staid and grave as Master Marsh of Marston should thus have played the roisterer, missing, perchance, a profitable bargain for the drunken orgies of midnight wassail, or the endearments of some rustic light-o'-love. Tenfold was his astonishment increased when, after retracing in silence their journey of the preceding day, the Hall, on their arrival about noon, was found in a state of uttermost confusion. No wife stood there to greet with the smile of bland affection her returning spouse; no page to hold his stirrup, or receive his gloves, his hat, and riding-rod. The doors were open, the rooms in most admired disorder; men and maidens peeping, hurrying hither and thither, and popping in and out, like rabbits in a warren. The lady of the mansion was nowhere to be found.

José, too, had disappeared; the latter had been last seen riding furiously towards Folkestone early in the preceding afternoon; to a question from Hodge Gardener he had hastily answered, that he bore a missive of moment from his mistress. The lean apprentice of

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Erasmus Buckthorne declared that the page had summoned his master, in haste, about six of the clock, and that they had rode forth together, as he verily believed, on their way back to the Hall, where he had supposed Master Buckthorne's services to be suddenly required on some pressing emergency. Since that time he had seen nought of either of them: the grey cob, however, had returned late at night, masterless, with his girths loose, and the saddle turned upside down.

Nor was Master Erasmus Buckthorne ever seen again. Strict search was made through the neighbourhood, but without success; and it was at length presumed that he must, for reasons which nobody could divine, have absconded, together with José and his faithless mistress. The latter had carried off with her the strong box, divers articles of valuable plate, and jewels of price. Her boudoir appeared to have been completely ransacked; the cabinet and drawers stood open and empty; the very carpet, a luxury then newly introduced into England, was gone. Marsh, however, could trace no vestige of the visionary scene which he affirmed to have been last night presented to his eyes.

Much did the neighbours marvel at his story:—some thought him mad; others, that he was merely indulging in that privilege to which, as a traveller, he had a right infeasible. Trusty Ralph said nothing, but shrugged his shoulders; and, falling into the rear, imitated the action of raising a wine-

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cup to his lips. An opinion, indeed, soon prevailed, that Master Thomas Marsh had gotten, in common parlance, exceedingly drunk on the preceding evening, and had dreamt all that he so circumstantially related. This belief acquired additional credit when they, whom curiosity induced to visit the woody knoll of Aldington Mount, declared that they could find no building such as that described, nor any cottage near; save one, indeed, a low-roofed hovel, once a house of public entertainment, but now half in ruins. The "Old Cat and Fiddle"—so was the tenement called—had been long uninhabited; yet still exhibited the remains of a broken sign, on which the keen observer might decipher something like a rude portrait of the animal from which it derived its name. It was also supposed still to afford an occasional asylum to the smugglers of the coast, but no trace of any visit from sage or mountebank could be detected; nor was the wise Aldrovando, whom many remembered to have seen at the fair, ever found again on all that country-side.

Of the runaways nothing was ever certainly known. A boat, the property of an old fisherman who plied his trade on the outskirts of the town, had been seen to quit the bay that night; and there were those who declared that she had more hands on board than Carden and his son, her usual complement; but, as the gale came on, and the frail bark was eventually found keel upwards on the Goodwin Sands, it was presumed that she had

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struck on that fatal quicksand in the dark, and that all on board had perished.

Little Marian, whom her profligate mother had abandoned, grew up to be a fine girl, and a handsome. She became, moreover, heiress to Marston Hall, and brought the estate into the Ingoldsby family by her marriage with one of its scions.

Thus far Mrs. Botherby.

It is a little singular that, on pulling down the old Hall in my grandfather's time, a human skeleton was discovered among the rubbish; under what particular part of the building I could never with any accuracy ascertain; but it was found enveloped in a tattered cloth, that seemed to have been once a carpet, and which fell to pieces almost immediately on being exposed to the air. The bones were perfect, but those of one hand were wanting; and the skull, perhaps from the labourer's pick-axe, had received considerable injury; the worm-eaten stock of an old-fashioned pistol lay near, together with a rusty piece of iron which a workman, more sagacious than his fellows, pronounced a portion of the lock, but nothing was found which the utmost stretch of human ingenuity could twist into a barrel.

The portrait of the fair Marian hangs yet in the Gallery of Tappington; and near it is another, of a young man in the prime of life, whom Mrs. Botherby affirms to be that of her father. It exhibits a mild and rather melancholy countenance, with a high forehead,

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and the peaked beard and mustaches of the seventeenth century. The signet-finger of the left hand is gone, and appears, on close inspection, to have been painted out by some later artist; possibly in compliment to the tradition, which, *teste Botherby*, records that of Mr. Marsh to have gangrened, and to have undergone amputation at the knuckle-joint. If really the resemblance of the gentleman alluded to, it must have been taken at some period antecedent to his marriage. There is neither date nor painter's name; but, a little above the head, on the dexter side of the picture, is an escutcheon, bearing "Quarterly, Gules and Argent, in the first quarter a horse's head of the second"; beneath it are the words "*Ætatis suæ 26*".

Legend of Hamilton Tighe

[Respect for the feelings of an honourable family, —nearly connected with the Ingoldsbys,—has induced me to veil the *real* “sponsorial and patronymic appellations” of my next hero under a *sobriquet* interfering neither with rhyme nor rhythm. I shall merely add that every incident in the story bears on the face of it the stamp of veracity, and that many “persons of honour” in the county of Berks, who well recollected Sir George Rooke’s expedition against Gibraltar, would, if they were now alive, gladly bear testimony to the truth of every syllable.]

The Captain is walking his quarter-deck,
With a troubled brow and a bended neck;
One eye is down through the hatchway cast,
The other turns up to the truck on the mast;
Yet none of the crew may venture to hint
“Our Skipper hath gotten a sinister squint!”

The Captain again the letter hath read
Which the bum-boat woman brought out to
Spithead—
Still, since the good ship sail’d away,
He reads that letter three times a-day;
Yet the writing is broad and fair to see
As a Skipper may read, in his degree,

LEGEND OF HAMILTON TIGHE

And the seal is as black, and as broad, and as flat,

As his own cockade in his own cock'd hat:
He reads, and he says, as he walks to and fro,
“Curse the old woman—she bothers me so!”

He pauses now, for the topmen hail—
“On the larboard quarter a sail! a sail!”
That grim old Captain he turns him quick,
And bawls through his trumpet for Hairy
faced Dick.

“The breeze is blowing—huzza! huzza!
The breeze is blowing—away! away!
The breeze is blowing—a race! a race!
The breeze is blowing—we near the chase!
Blood will flow, and bullets will fly,—
Oh where will be then young Hamilton
Tighe?”

—“On the foeman's deck, where a man
should be,
With his sword in his hand, and his foe at his
knee.
Cockswain, or boatswain, or reefer may try,
But the first man on board will be Hamilton
Tighe!”

Hairy-faced Dick hath a swarthy hue,
Between a gingerbread-nut and a Jew,
And his pigtail is long, and bushy, and thick,
Like a pump-handle stuck on the end of a
stick.

LEGEND OF HAMILTON TIGHE

Hairy-faced Dick understands his trade;
He stands by the breech of a long carronade,
The linstock glows in his bony hand,
Waiting that grim old Skipper's command.

"The bullets are flying—huzza! huzza!
The bullets are flying—away! away!"—
The brawny boarders mount by the chains,
And are over their buckles in blood and in
brains:

On the foeman's deck, where a man should be
Young Hamilton Tighe
Waves his cutlass high,
And *Capitaine Crapaud* bends low at his knee.

Hairy-faced Dick, linstock in hand,
Is waiting that grim-looking Skipper's com-
mand:—

A wink comes sly

From that sinister eye—

Hairy-faced Dick at once lets fly,
And knocks off the head of young Hamilton
Tighe!

There's a lady sits lonely in bower and hall,
Her pages and handmaidens come at her call:

"Now, haste ye, my handmaidens, haste and
see

How he sits there and glow'rs with his head
on his knee!"

The maidens smile, and, her thought to
destroy,

They bring her a little, pale, mealy-faced boy;

LEGEND OF HAMILTON TIGHE

And the mealy-faced boy says; "Mother, dear,
Now Hamilton's dead, I've a thousand a-
year!"

The lady has donn'd her mantle and hood,
She is bound for shrift at St. Mary's Rood:—
"Oh! the taper shall burn, and the bell shall
toll,
And the mass shall be said for my step-son's
soul,
And the tablet fair shall be hung on high,
Orate pro animâ Hamilton Tighe!"

Her coach and four
Draws up to the door,
With her groom, and her footman, and half-a-
score more;
The lady steps into her coach alone,
They hear her sigh, and they hear her groan;
They close the door, and they turn the pin,
*But there's One rides with her that never stept
in!*
All the way there, and all the way back,
The harness strains, and the coach-springs
crack,
The horses snort, and plunge and kick,
Till the coachman thinks he is driving Old
Nick;
And the grooms and the footmen wonder, and
say
"What makes the old coach so heavy to-day?"
But the mealy-faced boy peeps in, and sees
A man sitting there with his head on his
knees!

LEGEND OF HAMILTON TIGHE

'T is ever the same,—in hall or in bower,
Wherever the place, whatever the hour,
That Lady mutters, and talks to the air,
And her eye is fix'd on an empty chair;
But the mealy-faced boy still whispers with
dread,

“She talks to a man with never a head!”

There's an old Yellow Admiral living at Bath,
As grey as a badger, as thin as a lath;
And his very queer eyes have such very queer
leers,

They seem to be trying to peep at his ears;
That old Yellow Admiral goes to the Rooms,
And he plays long whist, but he frets and he
fumes,

For all his Knaves stand upside down,
And the Jack of Clubs does nothing but
frown;

And the Kings, and the Aces, and all the best
trumps

Get into the hands of the other old frumps;
While, close to his partner, a man he sees
Counting the tricks with his head on his knees.

In Ratcliffe Highway there's an old marine
store,

And a great black doll hangs out of the door;
There are rusty locks, and dusty bags,
And musty phials, and fusty rags,
And a lusty old woman, call'd Thirsty Nan,
And her crusty old husband's a Hairy-faced
man!

LEGEND OF HAMILTON TIGHE

That Hairy-faced man is sallow and wan,
And his great thick pigtail is wither'd and
gone;

And he cries, "Take away that lubberly chap
That sits there and grins with his head in his
lap!"

And the neighbours say, as they see him look
sick,

"What a rum old covey is Hairy-faced Dick!"

That Admiral, Lady, and Hairy-faced man
May say what they please, and may do what
they can;

But one thing seems remarkably clear,—
They may die to-morrow, or live till next
year,—

But wherever they live, or whenever they die,
They'll never get quit of young Hamilton
Tighe!

The Witches' Frolic

[The When,—the Where,—and the How,—of the succeeding narrative speak for themselves. It may be proper, however, to observe, that the ruins here alluded to, and improperly termed “the Abbey”, are not those of Bolsover, described in a preceding page, but the remains of a Preceptory once belonging to the Knights Templars, situate near Swynfield, Swinkefield, or, as it is now generally spelt and pronounced, Swingfield, Minnis, a rough tract of common land now undergoing the process of enclosure, and adjoining the woods and arable lands of Tappington, at the distance of some two miles from the Hall, to the South-eastern windows of which the time-worn walls in question, as seen over the intervening coppices, present a picturesque and striking object.]

[Scene, the “Snuggery” at Tappington.—Grandpapa in a high-backed, cane-bottomed elbow-chair of carved walnut-tree, dozing; his nose at an angle of forty-five degrees,—his thumbs slowly perform the rotatory motion described by lexicographers as “twiddling”.—The “Hope of the family” astride on a walking-stick, with burnt-cork mustachios, and a pheasant's tail pinned in his cap, solaceth himself with martial music.—Roused by a strain of surpassing dissonance, Grandpapa *loquitur*.]

Come hither, come hither, my little boy Ned!
Come hither unto my knee—

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

I cannot away with that horrible din,
That sixpenny drum, and that trumpet of tin.
Oh, better to wander frank and free
Through the Fair of good Saint Bartlemy,
Than list to such awful minstrelsie.
Now lay, little Ned, those nuisances by,
And I'll rede ye a lay of Grammarye.

[Grandpapa riseth, yawneth like the crater of an extinct volcano, proceedeth slowly to the window, and apostrophiseth the Abbey in the distance.]

I love thy tower, Grey Ruin,
I joy thy form to see,
Though reft of all,
Cell, cloister, and hall,
Nothing is left save a tottering wall
That, awfully grand and darkly dull,
Threaten'd to fall and demolish my skull,
As, ages ago, I wander'd along
Careless thy grass-grown courts among,
In sky-blue jacket, and trousers laced,
The latter uncommonly short in the waist

Thou art dearer to me, thou Ruin grey,
Than the Squire's verandah over the way;
And fairer, I ween,
The ivy sheen
That thy mouldering turret binds,
Than the Alderman's house about half a mile off,
With the green Venetian blinds.

Full many a tale would my Grandam tell,
In many a bygone day,

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

Of darksome deeds, which of old befell,
In thee, thou Ruin grey!
And I the readiest ear would lend,
And stare like frighten'd pig!
While my Grandfather's hair would have stood
up on end,
Had he not worn a wig.

One tale I remember of mickle dread—
Now lithe and listen, my little boy Ned!

Thou mayest have read, my little boy Ned,
Though thy mother thine idlesse blames,
In Doctor Goldsmith's history book,
Of a gentleman called King James,
In quilted doublet; and great trunk breeches,
Who held in abhorrence Tobacco and Witches.

Well,—in King James's golden days,—
For the days were golden then,—
They could not be less, for good Queen Bess
Had died, aged threescore and ten,
And her days we know,
Were all of them so;
While the Court poets sung, and the Court
gallants swore
That the days were as golden still as before.

Some people, 't is true, a troublesome few,
Who historical points would unsettle,
Have lately thrown out a sort of a doubt
Of the genuine ring of the metal;

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

But who can believe to a monarch so wise
People would dare tell a parcel of lies!

—Well, then, in good King James's days,—
Golden or not does not matter a jot,—
Yon Ruin a sort of a roof had got;
For though, repairs lacking, its walls had been
 cracking
Since Harry the Eighth sent its people a-packing,
 Though joists, and floors,
 And windows, and doors
Had all disappear'd, yet pillars by scores
Remain'd, and still propp'd up a ceiling or two.
While the belfry was almost as good as new;
You are not to suppose matters look'd just so
In the Ruin some two hundred years ago.

Just in that farthestmost angle, where
There are still the remains of a winding-stair,
One turret especially high in air
Uprear'd its tall gaunt form;
As if defying the power of Fate, or
The hand of "Time the Innovator";
And though to the pitiless storm
Its weaker brethren all around
Bowling, in ruin had strew'd the ground,
Alone it stood, while its fellows lay strew'd,
Like a four-bottle man in a company "screw'd",
Not firm on his legs, but by no means subdued.

One night—'t was in Sixteen hundred and six,—
I like when I can, Ned, the date to fix,—

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

The month was May,
Though I can't well say
At this distance of time the particular day—
But oh! that night, that horrible night!
—Folks ever afterwards said with affright
That they never had seen such a terrible sight.

The Sun had gone down fiery red;
And if, that evening, he laid his head
In Thetis's lap beneath the seas,
He must have scalded the goddess's knees.
He left behind him a lurid track
Of blood-red light upon clouds so black,
That Warren and Hunt, with the whole of
their crew,
Could scarcely have given them a darker hue.

There came a shrill and a whistling sound,
Above, beneath, beside, and around,
Yet leaf ne'er moved on tree!
So that some people thought old Beelzebub
must
Have been lock'd out of doors, and was blowing
the dust
From the pipe of his street-door key.
And then a hollow moaning blast
Came, sounding more dismally still than the
last,
And the lightning flash'd, and the thunder
growl'd,
And louder and louder the tempest howl'd,
And the rain came down in such sheets as
would stagger a
Bard for a simile short of Niagara.

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

Rob Gilpin "was a citizen";
But though of some "renown",
Of no great "credit" in his own,
Or any other town.

He was a wild and roving lad,
For ever in the alehouse boozing;
Or romping,—which is quite as bad,—
With female friends of his own choosing

And Rob this very day had made,
Not dreaming such a storm was brewing,
An assignation with Miss Slade,—
Their trysting-place that same grey Ruin.

But Gertrude Slade became afraid,
And to keep her appointment unwilling,
When she spied the rain on her window-pane
In drops as big as a shilling;
She put off her hat and her mantle again,—
"He'll never expect me in all this rain!"

But little he recks of the fears of the sex,
Or that maiden false to her tryst could be,
He had stood there a good half hour
Ere yet had commenced that perilous shower,
Alone by the trysting-tree!

Robin looks east, Robin looks west,
But he sees not her whom he loves the best;
Robin looks up, and Robin looks down,
But no one comes from the neighbouring town.

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

The storm came at last,—loud roar'd the blast,
And the shades of evening fell thick and fast;
The tempest grew; and the straggling yew,
His leafy umbrella, was wet through and
through;

Rob was half dead with cold and with fright,
When he spies in the Ruins a twinkling light—
A hop, two skips, and a jump, and straight
Rob stands within that postern gate.

And there were gossips sitting there,

By one, by two, by three:

Two were an old ill-favour'd pair:

But the third was young, and passing fair,
With laughing eyes, and with coal-black hair;

A daintie quean was she!

Rob would have given his ears to sip

But a single salute from her cherry lip.

As they sat in that old and haunted room,

In each one's hand was a huge birch broom,

On each one's head was a steeple-crown'd hat,

On each one's knee was a coal-black cat;

Each had a kirtle of Lincoln green—

It was, I trow, a fearsome scene.

“Now riddle me, riddle me right, Madge Gray,
What foot unhallow'd wends this way?

Goody Price, Goody Price, now areed me right,
Who roams the old Ruins this drearysome
night?”

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

Then up and spake that sonsie quean,
And she spake both loud and clear:
"Oh, be it for weal, or be it for woe,
Enter friend, or enter foe,
Rob Gilpin is welcome here!—

"Now tread we a measure! a hall! a hall!
Now tread we a measure," quoth she—
The heart of Robin
Beat thick and throbbing—
"Roving Bob, tread a measure with me!"
"Ay, lassie!" quoth Rob, as her hand he gripes,
"Though Satan himself were blowing the
pipes!"

Now around they go, and around, and around,
With hop-skip-and-jump, and frolicsome bound,
Such sailing and gliding,
Such sinking and sliding,
Such lofty curvetting,
And grand pirouetting;
Ned, you would swear that Monsieur Gilbert
And Miss Taglioni were capering there!

And oh! such awful music!—ne'er
Fell sounds so uncanny on mortal ear,
There were the tones of a dying man's groans
Mix'd with the rattling of dead men's bones:
Had you heard the shrieks, and the squeals,
and the squeaks,
You'd not have forgotten the sound for weeks.

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

And around, and around, and around they go,
Heel to heel, and toe to toe,
Prance and caper, curvet and wheel,
Toe to toe, and heel to heel.
“’T is merry, ’t is merry, Cummers, I trow,
To dance thus beneath the nightshade
bough!”—

“Goody Price, Goody Price, now riddle me
right,
Where may we sup this frolicsome night?”

“Mine host of the Dragon hath mutton and
veal!
The Squire hath partridge, and widgeon, and
teal;
But old Sir Thopas hath daintier cheer,
A pasty made of the good red deer,
A huge grouse pie, and a fine Florentine,
A fat roast goose, and a turkey and chine.”

—“Madge Gray, Madge Gray,
Now tell me, I pray,
Where’s the best wassail bowl to our roun-
delay?”

—“There is ale in the cellars of Tappington
Hall,
But the Squire is a churl, and his drink is small;
Mine host of the Dragon
Hath many a flagon

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

Of double ale, lambs' wool, and *eau de vie*,
But Sir Thopas, the Vicar,
Hath costlier liquor,—
A butt of the choicest *Malvoisie*.
He doth not lack
Canary or sack;
And a good pint stoup of Clary wine
Smacks merrily off with a turkey and chine!"

"Now away! and away! without delay,
Hey Cockalorum! my Broomstick gay!
We must be back ere the dawn of the day:
Hey up the chimney! away! away!"—
Old Goody Price
Mounts in a trice,
In showing her legs she is not over nice;
Old Goody Jones,
All skin and bones,
Follows "like winking".—Away go the crones,
Knees and nose in a line with the toes,
Sitting their brooms like so many Ducrows;
Latest and last
The damsel pass'd,
One glance of her coal-black eye she cast;
She laugh'd with glee loud laughter three,
"Dost fear, Rob Gilpin, to ride with me?"—

Oh, never might man unscath'd espy
One single glance from that coal-black eye.
—Away she flew!—
Without more ado
Rob seizes and mounts on a broomstick too,
"Hey! up the chimney, lass! Hey after you!"

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

It's a very fine thing, on a fine day in June,
To ride through the air in a Nassau Balloon;
But you'll find very soon, if you aim at the Moon
In a carriage like that, you're a bit of a "Spoon",
For the largest can't fly
Above twenty miles high,
And you're not half way then on your journey,
nor nigh;
While no man alive
Could ever contrive,
Mr. Green has declared, to get higher than five.
And the soundest Philosophers hold that,
perhaps,
If you reach'd twenty miles your balloon would
collapse,
Or pass by such action
The sphere of attraction,
Getting into the track of some comet—Good-
lack!
'T is a thousand to one that you'd never come
back;
And the boldest of mortals a danger like that
must fear,
Rashly protruding beyond our own atmosphere.
No, no; when I try
A trip to the sky,
I shan't go in that thing of yours, Mr. Gye,
Though Messieurs Monck Mason, and Spencer,
and Beazly,
All join in saying it travels so easily.
No; there's nothing so good
As a pony of wood—
Not like that which, of late, they stuck up on
the gate

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

At the end of the Park, which caused so much
debate,

And gave so much trouble to make it stand
straight,—

But a regular Broomstick—you'll find that the
favourite—

Above all, when, like Robin, you haven't to
pay for it.

—Stay—really I dread—

I am losing the thread

Of my tale; and it's time you should be in
your bed,

So lithe now, and listen, my little boy Ned!

The Vicarage walls are lofty and thick,
And the copings are stone, and the sides are
brick,

The casements are narrow, and bolted and
barr'd,

And the stout oak door is heavy and hard;
Moreover, by way of additional guard,
A great big dog runs loose in the yard,
And a horse-shoe is nail'd on the threshold
sill,—

To keep out aught that savours of ill,—
But, alack! the chimney-pot's open still!

—That great big dog begins to quail,
Between his hind-legs he drops his tail.

Crouch'd on the ground, the terrified hound
Gives vent to a very odd sort of a sound;
It is not a bark, loud, open, and free,
As an honest old watch-dog's bark should be;
It is not a yelp, it is not a growl,
But a something between a whine and a howl;

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

And, hark!—a sound from the window high
Responds to the watch-dog's pitiful cry :

It is not a moan,

It is not a groan:

It comes from a nose,—but is not what a
nose

Produces in healthy and sound repose.

Yet Sir Thopas the Vicar is fast asleep,

And his respirations are heavy and deep!

He snores, 't is true, but he snores no more
As he's aye been accustom'd to snore before,
And as men of his kidney are wont to snore
(Sir Thopas's weight is sixteen stone four);—
He draws his breath like a man distress'd
By pain or grief, or like one oppress'd
By some ugly old Incubus perch'd on his
breast.

A something seems

To disturb his dreams,

And thrice on his ear, distinct and clear,

Falls a voice as of somebody whispering near

In still small accents, faint and few,

“Hey down the chimney-pot!—Hey after
you!”

Throughout the Vicarage, near and far,

There is no lack of bolt or of bar;

There are plenty of locks

To closet and box,

Yet the pantry wicket is standing ajar!

And the little low door, though which you
must go,

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

Down some half-dozen steps, to the cellar
 below,
Is also unfastened, though no one may know,
By so much as a guess, how it comes to be so;
For wicket and door,
The evening before,
Were both of them lock'd, and the key safely
 placed
On the bunch that hangs down from the
Housekeeper's waist.

Oh! 't was a jovial sight to view
In that snug little cellar that frolicsome
 crew!—

Old Goody Price
Had got something nice,
A turkey-poult larded with bacon and spice;—
Old Goody Jones
Would touch nought that had bones,—
She might just as well mumble a parcel of
 stones.

Goody Jones, in sooth, hath got never a tooth,
And a New-College pudding of marrow and
 plums
Is the dish of all others that suiteth her gums.

Madge Gray was picking
The breast of a chicken,
Her coal-black eye, with its glance so sly,
Was fixed on Rob Gilpin himself, sitting by
With his heart full of love, and his mouth full
 of pie;

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

Grouse pie, with hare
In the middle, is fare
Which, duly concocted with science and care,
Doctor Kitchener says, is beyond all compare;
And a tenderer leveret
Robin had never ate;
So, in after times, oft he was wont to asseve-
rate.

“Now pledge we the wine-cup!—a health! a
health!

Sweet are the pleasures obtain'd by stealth!
Fill up! fill up!—the brim of the cup
Is the part that aye holdeth the toothsomest
sup!

Here's to thee, Goody Price!—Goody Jones,
to thee!—

To thee, Roving Rob! and again to me!
Many a sip, never a slip
Come to us four 'twixt the cup and the lip!”

The cups pass quick,
The toasts fly thick,
Rob tries in vain out their meaning to pick,
But hears the words “Scratch”, and “Old
Bogey”, and “Nick”,

More familiar grown,
Now he stands up alone,
Volunteering to give them a toast of his own.

“A bumper of wine!
Fill thine! Fill mine!
Here's a health to old Noah who planted the
Vine!”

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

Oh then what sneezing,
What coughing and wheezing,
Ensued in a way that was not over pleasing!
Goody Price, Goody Jones, and the pretty
Madge Gray,
All seem'd as their liquor had gone the wrong
way.

But the best of the joke was, the moment he
spoke
Those words which the party seem'd almost to
choke,
As by mentioning Noah some spell had been
broke,
Every soul in the house at that instant awoke!
And, hearing the din from barrel and binn,
Drew at once the conclusion that thieves had
got in.
Up jump'd the Cook and caught hold of her
spit;
Up jump'd the Groom and took bridle and bit;
Up jump'd the Gardener and shoulder'd his
spade;
Up jump'd the Scullion,—the Footman,—the
Maid
(The two last, by the way, occasioned some
scandal,
By appearing together with only one candle,
Which gave for unpleasant surmises some
handle);
Up jump'd the Swineherd,—and up jump'd
the big boy,
A nondescript under him, acting as Pig-boy;

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

Butler, Housekeeper, Coachman—from bottom
to top

Everybody jump'd up without parley or stop,
With the weapon which first in their way
chanced to drop,—

Whip, warming-pan, wig-block, mug, musket,
and mop.

Last of all doth appear,

With some symptoms of fear,

Sir Thopas in person to bring up the rear,

In a mix'd kind of costume half *Pontificalibus*,

Half what scholars denominate Pure *Naturali-*
bus;

Nay, the truth to express,

As you'll easily guess,

They have none of them time to attend much
to dress;

But He, or She,

As the case may be,

He or She seizes what He or She pleases,

Trunk-hosen or kirtles, and shirts or chemises,

And thus one and all, great and small, short
and tall,

Muster at once in the Vicarage-hall,

With upstanding locks, starting eyes, shorten'd
breath,

Like the folks in the Gallery Scene in Macbeth,

When Macduff is announcing their Sovereign's
death.

And hark!—what accents clear and strong,

To the listening throng came floating along!

'Tis Robin encoring himself in a song—

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

"Very good song! very well sung!
Jolly companions every one!"

On, on to the cellar! away! away!
On, on to the cellar without more delay!
The whole *posse* rush onwards in battle array—
Conceive the dismay of the party so gay,
Old Goody Jones, Goody Price, and Madge
Gray,

When the door bursting wide, they descried
the allied

Troops, prepared for the onslaught, roll in like
a tide,

And the spits, and the tongs, and the pokers
beside!—

"Boot and saddle's the word! mount, Cum-
mers, and ride!"—

Alarm was ne'er caused more strong and in-
digenous

By cats among rats, or a hawk in a pigeon-
house;

Quick from the view

Away they all flew,

With a yell, and a screech, and a halliballoo,

"Hey up the chimney! Hey after you!"—

The Volscians themselves made an exit less
speedy

From Corioli, "flutter'd like doves" by Mac-
ready.

They are gone,—save one,

Robin alone!

Robin, whose high state of civilisation
Precludes all idea of aërostation,

THE 'SWITCHES' FROLIC

And who now has no notion
Of more locomotion
Than suffices to kick, with much zeal and
devotion,
Right and left at the party, who pounced on
their victim,
And maul'd him, and kick'd him, and lick'd
him, and prick'd him,
As they bore him away scarce aware what was
done,
And believing it all but a part of the fun,
Hic—hiccoughing out the same strain he'd
begun,
“Jol—jolly companions every one!”

Morning grey
Scarce bursts into day
Ere at Tappington Hall there's the deuce to
pay;
The tables and chairs are all placed in array
In the old oak-parlour, and in and out
Domestics and neighbours, a motley rout,
Are walking, and whispering, and standing
about;
And the Squire is there
In his large arm-chair,
Leaning back with a grave magisterial air;
In the front of a seat a
Huge volume, called Fleta;
And Bracton, a tome of an old-fashion'd look,
And Coke upon Lyttleton, then a new book;
And he moistens his lips
With occasional sips

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

From a luscious sack-posset that smiles in a
tankard

Close by on a side-table—not that he drank
hard,

But because at that day,

I hardly need say,

The Hong Merchants had not yet invented
How Qua,

Nor as yet would you see Souchong or Bohea
At the tables of persons of any degree:

How our ancestors managed to do without tea
I must fairly confess is a mystery to me;

Yet your Lydgates and Chaucers

Had no cups and saucers;

Their breakfast, in fact, and the best they could
get,

Was a sort of a *déjeuner à la fourchette*;

Instead of our slops

They had cutlets and chops,

And sack-possets, and ale in stoups, tankards,
and pots;

And they wound up the meal with rump-
steaks and 'schalots.

Now the Squire lifts his hand

With an air of command,

And gives them a sign, which they all under-
stand,

To bring in the culprit; and straightway the
carter

And huntsman drag in that unfortunate martyr,
Still kicking, and crying, "Come,—what are
you arter?"

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

The charge is prepared, and the evidence
clear,

"He was caught in the cellar a-drinking the
beer!

And came there, there's very great reason to
fear,

With companions,—to say but the least of them,
—queer;

Such as Witches, and creatures

With horrible features,

And horrible grins,

And hook'd noses and chins,

Who'd been playing the deuce with his Reve-
rence's binns."

The face of his worship grows graver and
graver,

As the parties detail Robin's shameful be-
haviour;

Mister Buzzard, the clerk, while the tale is
reciting,

Sits down to reduce the affair into writing,

With all proper diction,

And due "legal fiction";

Viz.: "That he, the said prisoner, as clearly
was shown,

Conspiring with folks to deponents unknown,

With divers, that is to say, two thousand
people,

In two thousand hats, each hat peak'd like a
steeple,

With force and with arms,

And with sorcery and charms,

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

Upon two thousand brooms;
Enter'd four thousand rooms,
To wit, two thousand pantries; and two thousand
sand cellars,
Put in bodily fear; twenty thousand in-dwellers,
And with sundry,—that is to say, two thousand
sand—forks,
Drew divers,—that is to say, ten thousand—
corks,
And, with malice prepense, down their two
thousand throttles,
Emptied various,—that is to say, ten thousand
—bottles;
All in breach of the peace,—moved by Satan's
malignity—
And in spite of King James, and his Crown, and
his Dignity.
At words so profound
Rob gazes around,
But no glance sympathetic to cheer him is
found.
—No glance, did I say?
Yes, one!—Madge Gray!—
She is there in the midst of the crowd stand-
ing by,
And she gives him one glance from her coal-
black eye,
One touch to his hand, and one word to his
ear,—
(That's a line which I've stolen from Sir
Walter, I fear,)—
While nobody near
Seems to see her to hear;

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

As his worship takes up, and surveys, with a
strict eye,
The broom now produced as the *corpus delicti*,
Ere his fingers can clasp,
It is snatch'd from his grasp,
The end poked in his chest with a force makes
him gasp,
And, despite the decorum so due to the
Quorum,
His worship's upset, and so too is his jorum;
And Madge is astride on the broomstick before
em.
“*Hocus Pocus! Quick, Presto! and Hey Cocka-*
lorum!”
Mount, mount for your life, Rob!—Sir Justice,
adieu!—
—Hey up the chimney-pot! hey after you!”

Through the mystified group,
With a halloo and a whoop,
Madge on the pommel, and Robin *en croupe*,
The pair through the air ride as if in a chair,
While the party below stand mouth open and
stare;
“Clean bumbaized” and amazed, and fix'd,
all the room stick,
“Oh! what's gone with Robin,—and Madge,
—and the broomstick?”
Ay, “what's gone” indeed, Ned?—of what
befell
Madge Gray, and the broomstick, I never
heard tell:
But Robin was found, that morn, on the
ground,

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

In yon old grey Ruin again, safe and sound,
Except that at first he complained much of
 thirst,
And a shocking bad headache, of all ills the
 worst,
 And close by his knee
 A flask you might see,
But an empty one, smelling of *eau-de-vie*.

Rob from this hour is an alter'd man;
He runs home to his lodgings as fast as he
can,
Sticks to his trade;
Marries Miss Slade,
Becomes a Tee-totaller—that is the same
As Tee-totallers now, one in all but the name;
Grows fond of Small-beer, which is always a
steady sign,
Never drinks spirits except as a medicine;
Learns to despise
Coal-black eyes,
Minds pretty girls no more than so many
Guys;
Has a family, lives to be sixty, and dies!

Now, my little boy Ned,
Brush off to your bed,
Tie your night-cap on safe, or a napkin in-
stead,
Or these terrible nights, you'll catch cold in
your head;
And remember my tale, and the moral it
teaches,

THE WITCHES' FROLIC

Which you'll find much the same as what
Solomon preaches,
Don't flirt with young ladies! don't practise
soft speeches;
Avoid waltzes, quadrilles, pumps, silk hose,
and knee-breeches;—
Frequent not grey Ruins, — shun riot and
revelry,
Hocus Pocus, and Conjuring, and all sorts of
devilry;—
Don't meddle with broomsticks, — they're
Beelzebub's switches;
Of cellars keep clear,—they're the devil's own
ditches;
And beware of balls, banquettings, brandy,
and—witches!
Above all! don't run after black eyes!—if you
do,—
Depend on't you'll find what I say will come
true,—
Old Nick, some fine morning, will “hey after
you!”

The Jackdaw of Rheims

[Father John Ingoldsby, to whose papers I am largely indebted for the Saintly records which follow, was brought up by his father, a cadet of the family, in the Romish faith, and was educated at Douai for the church. Besides the manuscripts now at Tappington, he was the author of two controversial treatises on the connection between the Papal Hierarchy and the Nine of Diamonds.

From his well-known loyalty, evinced by secret services to the Royal cause during the Protectorate, he was excepted by name out of the acts against the Papists, became superintendent of the Queen Dowager's chapel at Somerset House, and enjoyed a small pension until his death, which took place in the third year of Queen Anne (1704), at the mature age of ninety-six. He was an ecclesiastic of great learning and piety, but from the stiff and antiquated phraseology which he adopted, I have thought it necessary to modernise it a little: this will account for certain anachronisms that have unavoidably crept in; the substance of his narratives has, however, throughout been strictly adhered to.

His hair-shirt, almost as good as new, is still preserved at Tappington,—but nobody ever wears it.]

"Tunc miser Corvus adeo conscientiae stimulis compunctus fuit, et execratio eum tantopere excarneficavit,

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

ut exinde tabescere inciperet, maciem contraheret, omnem cibum aversaretur, nec amplius crocitaret: pennæ præterea ei defluebant, et alis pendulis omnes facetias intermisit, et tam macer apparuit ut omnes ejus miserescerent."

"Tunc abbas sacerdotibus mandavit ut rursus furem absolverent; quo facto, Corvus, omnibus mirantibus, propediem convaluit, et pristinam sanitatem recuperavit."

De Illust. Ord. Cisterc.

The Jackdaw sat on the Cardinal's chair!
Bishop and abbot, and prior were there;
Many a monk, and many a friar,
Many a knight, and many a squire,
With a great many more of lesser degree,—
In sooth a goodly company;
And they served the Lord Primate on bended
knee.

Never, I ween,
Was a prouder seen,
Read of in books, or dreamt of in dreams,
Than the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims.

In and out
Through the motley rout,
That little Jackdaw kept hopping about;
Here and there,
Like a dog in a fair,
Over comfits and cates,
And dishes and plates,
Cowl and cope, and rochet and pall,
Mitre and crosier! he hopp'd upon all!
With saucy air,
He perch'd on the chair

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

Where, in state, the great Lord Cardinal sat
In the great Lord Cardinal's great red hat;
And he peer'd in the face
Of his Lordship's Grace,
With a satisfied look, as if he would say,
"We two are the greatest folks here to-day!"
And the priests, with awe,
As such freaks they saw,
Said, "The Devil must be in that little Jack-
daw!!"

The feast was over, the board was clear'd,
The flawns and the custards had all disappear'd,
And six little Singing-boys,—dear little souls!
In nice clean faces, and nice white stoles,
Came, in order due,
Two by two,
Marching that grand refectory through!
A nice little boy held a golden ewer,
Emboss'd and filled with water, as pure,
As any that flows between Rheims and Na-
mur,
Which a nice little boy stood ready to catch
In a fine golden hand-basin made to match.
Two nice little boys, rather more grown,
Carried lavender-water, and eau de Cologne;
And a nice little boy had a nice cake of soap,
Worthy of washing the hands of the Pope.
One little boy more
A napkin bore,
Of the best white diaper, fringed with pink,
And a Cardinal's Hat mark'd in "permanent
ink".

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

The great Lord Cardinal turns at the sight
Of these nice little boys dress'd all in white:
From his finger he draws
His costly turquoise;
And, not thinking at all about little Jackdaws,
Deposits it straight
By the side of his plate,
While the nice little boys on his Eminence
wait;
Till, when nobody's dreaming of any such thing,
That little Jackdaw hops off with the ring!

There's a cry and a shout,
And a deuce of a rout,
And nobody seems to know what they're about,
But the monks have their pockets all turn'd
inside out;
The friars are kneeling,
And hunting, and feeling
The carpet, the floor, and the walls, and the
ceiling.
The Cardinal drew
Off each plum-colour'd shoe,
And left his red stockings exposed to the view;
He peeps, and he feels
In the toes and the heels;
They turn up the dishes,—they turn up the
plates,—
They take up the poker and poke out the grates,
—They turn up the rugs,
They examine the mugs:—
But, no!—no such thing;—
They can't find THE RING!

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

And the Abbot declared that, "when nobody
twigg'd it,
Some rascal or other had popp'd in, and
prigg'd it!"

The Cardinal rose with a dignified look,
He call'd for his candle, his bell, and his book!
In holy anger, and pious grief,
He solemnly cursed that rascally thief!
He cursed him at board, he cursed him in
bed;
From the sole of his foot to the crown of his
head;
He cursed him in sleeping, that every night
He should dream of the devil, and wake in a
fright;
He cursed him in eating, he cursed him in
drinking,
He cursed him in coughing, in sneezing, in
winking;
He cursed him in sitting, in standing, in
lying;
He cursed him in walking, in riding, in
flying,
He cursed him in living, he cursed him
dying!—

Never was heard such a terrible curse!!

But what gaye rise
To no little surprise,
Nobody seem'd one penny the worse!

The day was gone,
The night came on,

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

The Monks and the Friars they search'd till
dawn;

When the Sacristan saw,
On crumpled claw,

Come limping a poor little lame Jackdaw!

No longer gay,

As on yesterday;

His feathers all seem'd to be turn'd the wrong
way;—

His pinions droop'd—he could hardly stand,—

His head was as bald as the palm of your hand;

His eye so dim,

So wasted each limb,

That, heedless of grammar, they all cried,

“THAT'S HIM!—

That's the scamp that has done this scandalous
thing!

That's the thief that has got my Lord Car-
dinal's Ring!”

The poor little Jackdaw,

When the monks he saw,

Feebly gave vent to the ghost of a caw;

And turn'd his bald head, as much as to say,

“Pray, be so good as to walk this way!”

Slower and slower

He limp'd on before,

Till they came to the back of the belfry door,

Where the first thing they saw,

Midst the sticks and the straw,

Was the RING in the nest of that little Jackdaw!

Then the great Lord Cardinal call'd for his
book,

And off that terrible curse he took;

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

The mute expression
Served in lieu of confession,
And, being thus coupled with full restitution,
The Jackdaw got plenary absolution!
—When those words were heard,
That poor little bird
Was so changed in a moment, 't was really
absurd,
He grew sleek, and fat;
In addition to that,
A fresh crop of feathers came thick as a mat!
His tail waggled more
Even than before;
But no longer it wagg'd with an impudent air,
No longer he perch'd on the Cardinal's chair.
He hopp'd now about
With a gait devout;
At Matins, at Vespers, he never was out;
And, so far from any more pilfering deeds,
He always seem'd telling the Confessor's beads.
If anyone lied,—or if anyone swore,—
Or slumber'd in pray'r-time and happen'd to
snore,
That good Jackdaw
Would give a great "Caw!"
As much as to say, "Don't do so any more!"
While many remark'd, as his manners they saw,
That they "never had known such a pious
Jackdaw!"
He long lived the pride
Of that country side,
And at last in the odour of sanctity died;
When, as words were too faint
His merits to paint,

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

The Conclave determined to make him a Saint;
And on newly-made Saints and Popes, as you
know,
It's the custom, at Rome, new names to bestow,
So they canonized him by the name of Jim
Crow!

A Lay of St. Dunstan

"This holy childe Dunstan was borne in ye yere of our Lorde ix. hondred & xxv. that tyme regnyng in this londe Kinge Athelston. . . .

"Whan it so was that Saynt Dunstan was wery of prayer than used he to werke in goldsmythes werke with his owne handes for to eschewe ydelnes."

Golden Legend.

St. Dunstan stood in his ivied tower,

Alembic, crucible, all were there;

When in came Nick to play him a trick,

In guise of a damsel passing fair.

Everyone knows

How the story goes:

He took up the tongs and caught hold of his
nose.

But I beg that you won't for a moment suppose

That I mean to go through, in detail, to you

A story at least as trite as it's true;

Nor do I intend

An instant to spend

On the tale, how he treated his monarch and
friend,

When, bolting away to a chamber remote,

Inconceivably bored by his Witen-gemote,

Edwy left them all joking,

And drinking, and smoking,

So tipsily grand, they'd stand nonsense from
no King,

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

But sent the Archbishop
Their Sovereign to fish up,
With a hint that perchance on his crown he
might feel taps
Unless he came back straight and took off his
heel-taps.
You must not be plagued with the same story
twice,
And perhaps have seen this one, by W. DYCE,
At the Royal Academy, very well done,
And mark'd in the catalogue Four, seven, one.

You might there view the Saint, who in sable
array'd is,
Coercing the Monarch away from the Ladies;
His right hand has hold of his Majesty's jerkin,
His left shows the door, and he seems to say,
"Sir King,
Your most faithful Commons won't hear of
your shirking!
Quit your tea, and return to your Barclai and
Perkyn,
Or, by Jingo, ere morning, no longer alive, a
Sad victim you 'll lie to your love for Elgiva!"

No farther to treat
Of this ungallant feat,
What I mean to do now is succinctly to paint
One particular fact in the life of the Saint,
Which somehow, for want of due care, I pre-
sume,
Has escaped the researches of Rapin and
Hume,

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

In recounting a miracle, both of them men,
 who a Great deal fall short of Jacques, Bishop of
Genoa,
An Historian who likes deeds like these to
 record—
See his *Aurea Legenda*, by Wynkyn de Worde.

St. Dunstan stood again in his tower,
 Alembic, crucible, all complete;
He had been standing a good half-hour,
And now he utter'd the words of power,
 And call'd to his Broomstick to bring
 him a seat.

The words of power!—and what be they
To which e'en Broomsticks bow and obey?—
Why,—'t were uncommonly hard to say,
As the prelate I named has recorded none of
 them,
 What they may be,
 But I know they are three,
And ABRACADABRA, I take it, is one of
 them:
For I'm told that most Cabalists use that
 identical
Word, written thus, in what they call "a
 Pentacle".

However that be,
You'll doubtless agree
It signifies little to you or to me,
As not being dabblers in Grammarye;

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

Still, it must be confess'd, for a Saint to repeat
Such language aloud is scarcely discreet;
For, as Solomon hints to folks given to chatter,
“A bird of the air may carry the matter”;

And in sooth,

From my youth,

I remember a truth.

Insisted on much in my earlier years,
To wit, “Little Pitchers have very long
ears!”

Now, just such a “Pitcher” as those I allude
to

Was outside the door, which his “ears” ap-
peared glued to.

Peter, the Lay-brother, meagre and thin,

Five feet one in his sandal shoon,

While the Saint thought him sleeping,

Was listening and peeping,

And watching his master the whole after-
noon.

This Peter the Saint had pick'd out from his
fellows,

To look to his fire, and to blow with the
bellows,

To put on the Wall's-Ends and Lambtons
whenever he

Chose to indulge in a little *orfevverie*;

—Of course you have read,

That St. Dunstan was bred

A Goldsmith, and never quite gave up the
trade!

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

The Company—richest in London, 't is said—
Acknowledge him still as their Patron and Head;

Nor is it so long

Since a capital song

In his praise—now recorded their archives
among—

Delighted the noble and dignified throng

Of their guests, who, the newspapers told the
whole town,

With cheers “pledged the wine-cup to Dun-
stan’s renown”,

When Lord Lyndhurst, THE DUKE, and Sir
Robert, were dining

At the Hall some time since with the Prime
Warden Twining.—

—I am sadly digressing—a fault which some-
times

One can hardly avoid in these gossiping
rhymes—

A slight deviation’s forgiven! but then this is
Too long, I fear, for a decent parenthesis,

So I’ll rein up my Pegasus sharp, and retreat,
or

You’ll think I’ve forgotten the Lay-brother
Peter,

Whom the Saint, as I said,

Kept to turn down his bed,

Dress his palfreys and cobs,

And do other odd jobs,—

As reducing to writing

Whatever he might, in

The course of the day or the night, be inditing,
And cleaning the plate of his mitre with whit-
ing;

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

Performing, in short, all those duties and
offices exact from Lay-brothers and Novices.

It occurs to me here
You'll perhaps think it queer
That St. Dunstan should have such a personage
near,

When he'd only to say
Those words,—be what they may,—
And his Broomstick at once his commands
would obey.—

That's true—but the fact is
'T was rarely his practice
Such aid to resort to, or such means apply,
Unless he'd some "dignified knot" to untie,
Adopting, though sometimes, as now, he'd
reverse it,

Old Horace's maxim "*nec Broomstick intersit*".—
—Peter, the Lay-brother, meagre and thin,
Heard all the Saint was saying within;
Peter, the Lay-brother, sallow and spare,
Peep'd through the key-hole, and—what saw
he there?—

Why,—A BROOMSTICK BRINGING A RUSH-
BOTTOM'D CHAIR.

What Shakspeare observes, in his play of King
John,

Is undoubtedly right,
That "ofttimes the sight
Of means to do ill deeds will make ill deeds
done".

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

Here's Peter, the Lay-brother, pale-faced and
meagre,
A good sort of man, only rather too eager
To listen to what other people are saying
When he ought to be minding his business or
praying,

Gets into a scrape,—and an awkward one
too,—

As you'll find, if you've patience enough to go
through

The whole of the story

I'm laying before ye,—

Entirely from having "the means" in his view
Of doing a thing which he ought not to do!

Still rings in his ear,

Distinct and clear,

Abracadabra! that word of fear!

And the two which I never yet happen'd to
hear.

Still doth he spy,

With Fancy's eye,

The Broomstick at work, and the Saint stand-
ing by;

And he chuckles, and says to himself, with glee,
"Aha! that Broomstick shall work for me!"

Hark!—that swell

O'er flood and o'er fell,

Mountain, and dingle, and moss-cover'd dell!

List!—'t is the sound of the Compline bell,

And St. Dunstan is quitting his ivied cell;

Peter, I wot,

Is off like a shot,

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

Or a little dog scalded by something that's hot,
For he hears his Master approaching the spot
Where he'd listened so long, though he knew
 he ought not:

Peter remember'd his Master's frown—
He trembled—he'd not have been caught for a
 crown;

 Howe'er you may laugh,
 He'd rather, by half,
Have run up to the top of the tower and
 jump'd down.

The Compline hour is past and gone,
Evening service is over and done;

 The monks repair

 To their frugal fare,

A snug little supper of something light
And digestible, ere they retire for the night.

For, in Saxon times, in respect to their cheer,
St. Austin's Rule was by no means severe,
But allow'd, from the Beverley Roll 't would
 appear,

Bread and cheese, and spring onions, and
 sound table-beer,

And even green peas, when they were not too
 dear;

Not like the rule of La Trappe, whose chief
 merit is

Said to consist in its greater austerities;

And whose monks, if I rightly remember their
 laws,

 Ne'er are suffer'd to speak,

 Think only in Greek,

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

And subsist, as the Bears do, by sucking their
paws.

Astonish'd I am

The gay Baron Geramb,

With his head sav'ring more of the Lion than
Lamb,

Could e'er be persuaded to join such a set—I

Extend the remark to Signor Ambrogetti.—

For a monk of La Trappe is as thin as a rat,

While an Austin Friar was jolly and fat ;

Though, of course, the fare to which I allude

With as good table-beer as ever was brew'd,

Was all “caviare to the multitude”,

Extending alone to the clergy, together in

Hall assembled,—and not to Lay-brethren.

St. Dunstan himself sits there at his post,

On what they say is

Called a Dais,

O'erlooking the whole of his clerical host,

And eating poach'd eggs with spinach and
toast ;

Five Lay-brothers stand behind his chair,

But where is the sixth?—Where's Peter!—

Ay, WHERE?

'Tis an evening in June,

And a little half moon,

A brighter no fond lover ever set eyes on,

Gleaming and beaming,

And dancing the stream in,

Has made her appearance above the horizon ;

Just such a half moon as you see, in a play,

On the turban of Mustapha Muley Bey,

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

Or the fair Turk who weds with the "Noble
Lord Bateman";

—*Vide* plate in George Cruikshank's memoirs
of that great man.

She shines on a turret remote and lone,
A turret with ivy and moss overgrown,
And lichens that thrive on the cold dank stone;
Such a tower as a poet of no mean *calibre*

I once knew and loved, poor, dear Reginald
Heber,

Assigns to oblivion—a den for a She bear;

Within it are found,

Strew'd above and around,

On the hearth, on the table, the shelves, and
the ground,

All sorts of instruments, all sorts of tools,

To name which, and their uses, would puzzle
the Schools,

And make very wise people look very like fools;

Pincers and hooks,

And black-letter books,

All sorts of pokers, and all sorts of tongs,

And all sorts of hammers, and all that belongs

To Goldsmiths' work, chemistry, alchymy,—
all,

In short that a Sage,

In that erudite age,

Could require, was at hand, or at least within
call.

In the midst of the room lies a Broomstick!—
and there

A Lay-brother sits in a rush-bottom'd chair!

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

Abracadabra, that fearful word,
And the two which, I said, I have never yet
heard,

Are utter'd.—'T is done!

Peter, full of his fun,

Cries, "Broomstick! you lubberly son of a gun!
Bring ale!—bring a flagon—a hogshead—a tun!

'T is the same thing to you;

I have nothing to do;

And, 'fore George, I'll sit here, and I'll drink
till all's blue!"

No doubt you've remark'd how uncommonly
quick

A Newfoundland puppy runs after a stick,
Brings it back to its master, and gives it him
—Well,

So potent the spell,

The Broomstick perceived it was vain to rebel,
So ran off like that puppy;—some cellar was
near,

For in less than ten seconds 't was back with
the beer!

Peter seizes the flagon; but ere he can suck
Its contents, or enjoy what he thinks his good
luck,

The Broomstick comes in with a tub in a
truck;

Continues to run

At the rate it begun,

And, *au pied de lettre*, next brings in a tun!

A fresh one succeeds, then a third, then an-
other,

Discomfiting much the astounded Lay-brother;

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN.

Who, had he possess'd fifty pitchers or stoups,
They all had been too few; for, arranging in
groups

The barrels, the Broomstick next *started the
hoops*:

The ale deluged the floor,
But, still, through the door,
Said Broomstick kept bolting, and bringing in
more.

E'en Macbeth to Macduff
Would have cried "Hold! enough!"

If half as well drench'd with such "perilous
stuff",

And Peter, who did not expect such a rough
visit,

Cried lustily, "Stop!—That will do, Broom-
stick!—*Sufficit!*"

But ah, well-a-day!

The Devil, they say,
'Tis easier at all times to raise than to lay.

Again and again

Peter roar'd out in vain

His Abracadabra, and t'other words twain:—

As well might one try

A pack in full cry

To check, and call off from their headlong
career,

By bawling out, "Yoicks!" with one's hand
at one's ear.

The longer he roar'd, and the louder and
quicker,

The faster the Broomstick was bringing in
liquor.

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

The poor Lay-brother knew

Not on earth what to do—

He caught hold of the Broomstick and snapt it
in two.—

Worse and worse!—Like a dart

Each part made a start,

And he found he'd been adding more fuel to
fire,

For *both* now came loaded with Meux's entire;
Combe's, Delafield's, Hanbury's, Truman's—
no stopping—

Goding's, Charenton's, Whitbread's continued
to drop in,

With Hodson's pale ale, from the Sun Brew-
house, Wapping.

The firms differ'd then, but I can't put a tax
on

My memory to say what their names were in
Saxon.

To be sure the best beer

Of all did not appear;

For I've said 't was in June, and so late in the
year.

The "Trinity Audit Ale" is not come-at-able,
—As I've found to my great grief when dining
at that table.

Now extremely alarm'd, Peter scream'd with-
out ceasing,

For a flood of brown stout he was up to his
knees in,

Which, thanks to the Broomstick, continued
increasing;

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

He fear'd he'd be drown'd,
And he yell'd till the sound
Of his voice, wing'd by terror, at last reach'd
the ear
Of St. Dunstan himself, who had finish'd *his*
beer,
And had put off his mitre, dalmatic, and shoes,
And was just stepping into his bed for a snooze.
His Holiness paused when he heard such a
clatter;
He could not conceive what on earth was the
matter.
Slipping on a few things, for the sake of de-
corum,
He issued forthwith from his *Sanctum sanctorum*,
And calling a few of the Lay-brothers near
him,
Who were not yet in bed, and who happen'd
to hear him,
At once led the way,
Without farther delay,
To the tower, where he'd been in the course
of the day.
Poor Peter!—alas!—though St. Dunstan was
quick,
There were two there before him—Grim Death,
and Old Nick!—
When they open'd the door out the malt-liquor
flow'd,
Just as when the great Vat burst in Tott'n'am
Court Road;
The Lay-brothers nearest were up to their
necks

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

In an instant, and swimming in strong double
X;

While Peter, who, spite of himself now had
drank hard,

After floating awhile, like a toast in a tankard,
To the bottom had sunk,

And was spied by a monk,

Stone-dead, like poor Clarence, half drown'd
and half drunk.

In vain did St. Dunstan exclaim, "*Vade retro
Strongbeerum!—discede a Lay-fratre Petro!*"—

Queer Latin, you'll say,

That præfix of "*Lay*",

And *Strongbeerum!*—I own they'd have call'd
me a blockhead if

At school I had ventured to use such a Voca-
tive;

'Tis a barbarous word, and to me it's a query

If you'll find it in Patrick, Morell, or Moreri;

But, the fact is, the Saint was uncommonly
flurried,

And apt to be loose in his Latin when hurried;

The brown stout, however, obeys to the letter,

Quite as well as if talk'd to, in Latin much
better,

By a grave Cambridge Johnian,

Or graver Oxonian,

Whose language, we all know, is quite Cicero-
nian.

It retires from the corpse, which is left high
and dry;

But, in vain do they snuff and hot towels apply,

And other means used by the faculty try.

A LAY OF ST. DUNSTAN

When once a man's dead
There's no more to be said;
Peter's "Beer with an *e*" was his "Bier with
an *i*!!!"

MORAL

By way of a moral, permit me to pop in
The following maxims:—Beware of eaves-
dropping!—
Don't make use of language that isn't well
scann'd!—
Don't meddle with matters you don't under-
stand!—
Above all, what I'd wish to impress on both
sexes
Is,—Keep clear of Broomsticks, Old Nick, and
three XXX's.

L'Envoye

In Goldsmiths' Hall there's a handsome glass-
case,
And in it a stone figure, found on the place,
When, thinking the old Hall no longer a plea-
sant one,
They pull'd it all down, and erected the present
one.
If you look, you'll perceive that this stone
figure twists
A thing like a broomstick in one of its fists.
It's so injured by time, you can't make out a
feature;
But it is not St. Dunstan,—so doubtless it's
Peter.

The Lay of St. Odille

[Mr. Barney Maguire has laid claim to the next Saint as a countrywoman; and "Why wouldn't he?" when all the world knows the O'Dells were a fine ould, ancient family, sated in Tipperary

"Ere the Lord Mayor stole his collar of gowld,
And sowld it away to a trader" ?

He is manifestly wrong; but, as he very rationally observes, "No matter for that,—she's a Saint any way!"]

Odille was a maid of a dignified race;
Her father, Count Otto, was lord of Alsace;
Such an air, such a grace,
Such a form, such a face,

All agreed, 't were a fruitless endeavour to trace
In the Court, or within fifty miles of the place.
Many ladies in Strasburg were beautiful, still
They were beat all to sticks by the lovely
Odille.

But Odille was devout, and, before she was
nine,

Had "experienced a call" she consider'd
divine,

To put on the veil at St. Ermengarde's shrine.—
Lords, Dukes, and Electors, and Counts Pala-
tine

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

Came to seek her in marriage from both sides
the Rhine;

But vain their design,

They are all left to pine,

Their oglings and smiles are all useless; in
fine,

Not one of these gentlefolks, try as they will,
Can draw, "Ask my papa" from the cruel
Odille.

At length one of her suitors, a certain Count
Herman,

A highly respectable man as a German,
Who smoked like a chimney, and drank like a
Merman,

Paid his court to her father, conceiving his
firman

Would soon make her bend,

And induce her to lend

An ear to a love-tale in lieu of a sermon.

He gain'd the old Count, who said, "Come,
Mynheer, fill!—

Here's luck to yourself and my daughter
Odille!"

The Lady Odille was quite nervous with fear
When a little bird whisper'd that toast in her
ear;

She murmur'd "Oh, dear!

My Papa has got queer,

I am sadly afraid, with that nasty strong beer!

He's so very austere, and severe, that it's
clear,

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

If he gets in his 'tantrums', I can't remain
here;

But St. Ermengarde's convent is luckily near;
It were folly to stay

Pour prendre congé,

I shall put on my bonnet, and e'en run away!"

—She unlock'd the back door, and descended
the hill,

On whose crest stood the towers of the sire of
Odille.

—When he found she'd levanted, the Count
of Alsace

At first turn'd remarkably red in the face;

He anathematized, with much unction and
grace,

Every soul who came near, and consign'd the
whole race

Of runaway girls to a very warm place;

With a frightful grimace

He gave orders for chase;

His vassals set off at a deuce of a pace,

And of all whom they met, high or low, Jack
or Jill,

Ask'd, "Pray have you seen anything of
Odille?"—

Now I think I've been told,—for I'm no
sporting man,—

That the "knowing-ones" call this by far the
best plan,

"Take the lead and then keep it!"—that is, if
you can.—

Odille thought so too, so she set off and ran,

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

Put her best leg before,
Starting at score,
As I said some lines since, from that little back
door,
And not being miss'd until half after four,
Had what hunters call "law" for a good hour
and more;
Doing her best,
Without stopping to rest,
Like "young Lochinvar who came out of the
West".
"'T is done!—I am gone!—over briar, brook,
and rill!
They'll be sharp lads who catch me!" said
young Miss Odille.

But you've all read in Æsop, or Phædrus, or
Gay,
How a tortoise and hare ran together one day;
How the hare, making play,
"Progress'd right slick away",
As "them tarnation chaps" the Americans
say;
While the tortoise, whose figure is rather *outré*
For racing, crawl'd straight on, without let or
stay,
Having no post-horse duty or turnpikes to pay,
Till, ere noon's ruddy ray
Changed to eve's sober grey,
Though her form and obesity caused some
delay,
Perseverance and patience brought up her lee-
way,

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

And she chased her fleet-footed "praycursor"
until
She o'ertook her at last;—so it fared with
Odille!

For although, as I said, she ran gaily at first,
And show'd no inclination to pause, if she
durst;
She at length felt opprest with the heat, and
with thirst,
Its usual attendant; nor was that the worst,
Her shoes went down at heel; at last one of
them burst.

Now a gentleman smiles
At a trot of ten miles;
But not so the Fair; then consider the stiles,
And as then ladies seldom wore things with a
frill
Round the ankle, these stiles sadly bother'd
Odille.

Still, despite all the obstacles placed in her
track,
She kept steadily on, though the terrible crack
In her shoe made of course her progression
more slack,
Till she reach'd the Swartz Forest (in English
the Black);
I cannot divine
How the boundary line
Was pass'd which is somewhere there form'd
by the Rhine—
Perhaps she'd the knack
To float o'er on her back—

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

Or, perhaps, cross'd the old bridge of boats at
Brisach

(Which Vauban, some years after, secured from
attack

By a bastion of stone which the Germans
call "Wacke"),

All I know is, she took not so much as a snack;
Till, hungry and worn, feeling wretchedly ill,
On a mountain's brow sank down the weary
Odille.

I said on its "brow", but I should have said
"crown",

For 't was quite on the summit, bleak, barren,
and brown,
And so high that 't was frightful indeed to look
down

Upon Friburg, a place of some little renown,
That lay at its foot; but imagine the frown
That contracted her brow, when full many a
clown

She perceived coming up from that horrid
post-town.

They had follow'd her trail,
And now thought without fail,

As little boys say, to "lay salt on her tail";
While the Count, who knew no other law but
his will,

Swore that Herman that evening should marry
Odille.

Alas, for Odille! poor dear! what could she do?
Her father's retainers now had her in view,

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

As she found from their raising a joyous
halloo;

While the Count, riding on at the head of his
crew,

In their snuff-colour'd doublets and breeches of
blue;

Was huzzaining and urging them on to pursue.—

What, indeed, *could* she do?

She very well knew

If they caught her how much she should have
to go through;

But then—she'd so shocking a hole in her shoe!

And to go further on was impossible;—true,

She might jump o'er the precipice;—still there
are few

In her place, who could manage their courage
to screw

Up to bidding the world such a sudden
adieu:—

Alack! how she envied the birds as they flew;

No Nassau balloon, with its wicker canoe,

Came to bear her from him she loath'd worse
than a Jew;

So she fell on her knees in a terrible stew,

Crying, "Holy St. Ermengarde!

Oh, from these vermin guard

Her whose last hope rests entirely on you;—

Don't let papa catch me, dear Saint!—rather kill

At once, *sur-le-champ*, your devoted Odille!"

It's delightful to see those who strive to
oppress

Get baulk'd when they think themselves sure
of success.

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

The Saint came to the rescue!—I fairly confess

I don't see, as a Saint, how she well could do less

Than to get such a votary out of her mess.

Odille had scarce closed her pathetic address

When the rock, gaping wide as the Thames at Sheerness,

Closed again, and secured her within its recess,
In a natural grotto,

Which puzzled Count Otto,

Who could not conceive where the deuce she had got to.

'T was her voice!—but 't was *Vox et præterea Nil!*

Nor could anyone guess what was gone with Odille!

Then burst from the mountain a splendour that quite

Eclipsed, in its brilliance, the finest Bude light,

And there stood St. Ermengarde, drest all in white,

A palm-branch in her left hand, her beads in her right;

While, with faces fresh gilt, and with wings burnish'd bright,

A great many little boys' heads took their flight

Above and around to a very great height,

And seem'd pretty lively considering their plight,

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

Since every one saw,
With amazement and awe,
They could never sit down, for they hadn't *de*
quoi.—

All at the sight,
From the knave to the knight,
Felt a very unpleasant sensation, call'd fright;
While the Saint, looking down,
With a terrible frown,
Said, "My Lords, you are done most remark-
ably brown!—
I am really ashamed of you both;—my nerves
thrill
At your scandalous conduct to poor, dear
Odille!

"Come, make yourselves scarce!—it is useless
to stay,
You will gain nothing here by a longer delay.
'Quick! Presto! Begone!' as the conjurors
say;
For as to the Lady, I've stow'd her away
In this hill, in a stratum of London blue
clay;
And I shan't, I assure you, restore her to-day
Till you faithfully promise no more to say
'Nay',
But declare, 'If she will be a nun, why she
may'.
For this you've my word, and I never yet
broke it,
So put that in your pipe, my Lord Otto, and
smoke it!—

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

One hint to your vassals,—a month at ‘the
Mill’
Shall be nuts to what they’ll get who worry
Odille!”

The Saint disappear’d as she ended, and so
Did the little boys’ heads, which, above and
below,

As I told you a very few stanzas ago,
Had been flying about her, and jumping Jim
Crow;

Though, without any body, or leg, foot, or
toe,

How they managed such antics, I really don’t
know;

Be that as it may, they all “melted like snow
Off a dyke”, as the Scotch say in sweet
Edinbro’.

And there stood the Count,
With his men, on the mount,
Just like “twenty-four jackasses all on a row”.
What was best to be done—’t was a sad bitter
pill—

But gulp it he must, or else lose his Odille.

The lord of Alsace therefore alter’d his plan,
And said to himself, like a sensible man,
“I can’t do as I would;—I must do as I can;
It will not do to lie under any Saint’s ban,
For your hide, when you do, they all manage
to tan;

So Count Herman must pick up some Betsey
or Nan,

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

Instead of my girl,—some Sue, Polly, or Fan;—
If he can't get the corn he must do with the
And make shift with the pot if he can't have
the pan."

With such proverbs as these

He went down on his knees

And said, "Blessed St. Ermengarde, just as
you please—

They shall build a new convent,—I'll pay the
whole bill

(Taking discount),—its Abbess shall be my
Odille!"

There are some of my readers, I'll venture to
say,

Who have never seen Friburg, though some of
them may,

And others, 't is likely may go there some day.

Now, if ever you happen to travel that way,

I do beg and pray, 't will your pains well
repay,—

That you'll take what the Cockney folks calls
a "po-shay",

(Though in Germany these things are more
like a dray,)

You may reach this same hill with a single
relay,—

And do look how the rock,

Through the whole of its block,

Is split open, as though by some violent shock

From an earthquake, or lightning, or horrid
hard knock

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

From the club-bearing fist of some jolly old
cock
Of a Germanised giant, Thor, Woden, or Lok;
And see how it rears
Its two monstrous great ears,
For when once you're between them such
each side appears;
And list to the sound of the water one hears,
Drip, drip, from the fissures, like rain-drops or
tears,
—Odille's, I believe,—which have flowed all
these years;
—I think they account for them so;—but the
rill

I am sure is connected some way with Odille.

MORAL

Now then, for a moral, which always arrives
At the end, like the honey bees take to their
hives,
And the more one observes it the better one
thrives,—
We have all heard it said in the course of our
lives,
“Needs must when a certain old gentleman
drives”,
’Tis the same with a lady,—if once she con-
trives
To get hold of the ribands, how vainly one
strives
To escape from her lash, or to shake off her
gyves!

THE LAY OF ST. ODILLE

Then let's act like Count Otto, and while one
survives,

Succumb to *our* She-Saints—videlicet wives!

(*Aside.*)

That is if one has not a "good bunch of
fives".—

(I can't think how that last line escaped from
my quill,

For I am sure it has nothing to do with
Odille.)

Now young ladies, to you!—

Don't put on the shrew!—

And don't be surprised if your father looks
blue

When you're pert, and won't act as he wants
you to do!

Be sure that you never elope;—there are few,—

Believe me, you'll find what I say to be true,—

Who run restive, but find as they bake they
must brew,

And come off at last with "a hole in their
shoe";

Since not even Clapham, that sanctified ville,

Can produce enough saints to save *every* Odille.

THE DAY OF ST. JULIAN

There is a great deal of good in the world, and what one

man can do for another is not small.

(Sings)

That is it, one has not a "good deed" of

his own.

(I can't think now that last time I ever saw

you again.)

For I am sure it was nothing to do with

the day.

Not a word said to you—

Don't get on the show!

And don't be surprised if you hear him

say

"What you're best, and won't let us be worse

than you do."

Be sure that you never stop—there are few—

believe me, you'll find what I say to be true—

When you meet us, but find us very busy then

and busy.

And come on at last with "a tale in verse

and rhyme."

So, not even Christmas, but surely, still

Can produce enough saints to save the world.

A Lay of St. Nicholas

*“Nycolas, cytezyn of ye cyte of Paneraes, was borne
of ryche and holye kynne.
And hys fader was named Epiphanus, and his moder
Johane.”*

[He was born on a cold frosty morning, on the 6th of December (upon which day his feast is still observed), but in what *anno Domini* is not so clear; his baptismal register, together with that of his friend and colleague, St. Thomas at Hill, having been “lost in the great fire of London”.

St. Nicholas was a great patron of Mariners, and, saving your presence—of Thieves also, which honourable fraternity have long rejoiced in the appellation of his “Clerks”. Cervantes’s story of Sancho’s detecting a sum of money in a swindler’s walking-stick, is merely the Spanish version of a “Lay of St. Nicholas”, extant “in choice Italian” a century before honest Miguel was born.]

“Statim sacerdoti apparuit diabolus in specie puellæ pulchritudinis miræ, et ecce Divus, fide catholicâ, et cruce, et aquâ benedicta armatus venit, et aspersit aquam in nomine Sanctæ et Individuæ Trinitatis, quam, quasi ardentem, diabolus, nequaquam sustinere valens, mugitibus fugit.”—*Roger Hoveden.*

“Lord Abbot! Lord Abbot! I’d fain confess;
I am a-weary, and worn with woe;
Many a grief doth my heart oppress,
And haunt me whithersoever I go!”

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

On bended knee spake the beautiful Maid;

“Now lithe and listen, Lord Abbot, to me!”—
“Now naye, Fair Daughter.” the Lord Abbot
said,

“Now naye, in sooth it may hardly be;

“There is Mess Michael, and holy Mess John,
Sage Penitauncers I ween be they!
And hard by doth dwell, in St. Catherine’s cell,
Ambrose, the anchorite, old and grey!”

“—Oh, I will have none of Ambrose or John,
Though sage Penitauncers I trow they be;
Shrive me may none save the Abbot alone,
Now listen, Lord Abbot, I speak to thee.

“Nor think foul scorn, though mitre adorn
Thy brow, to listen to shrift of mine!
I am a Maiden royally born,
And I come of old Plantagenet’s line.

“Though hither I stray, in lowly array,
I am a damsel of high degree;
And the Compte of Eu, and the Lord of Pon-
thieu,
They serve my father on bended knee!

“Counts a many, and Dukes a few,
A suitoring came to my father’s Hall;
But the Duke of Lorraine, with his large
domain,
He pleased my father beyond them all.

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

"Dukes a many, and Counts a few,
I would have wedded right cheerfullie;
But the Duke of Lorraine was uncommonly
plain,
And I vow'd that he ne'er should my bride-
groom be!

"So hither I fly, in lowly guise,
From their gilded domes and their princely
halls;
Fain would I dwell in some holy cell,
Or within some Convent's peaceful walls!"

—Then out and spake that proud Lord Abbot,
"Now rest thee, Fair Daughter, withouten
fear
Nor Count nor Duke but shall meet the rebuke
Of Holy Church an he seek thee here:

"Holy Church denieth all search
'Midst her sanctified ewes and her saintly
rams;
And the wolves doth mock who would scathe
her flock,
Or, especially, worry her little pet lambs.

"Then lay, Fair Daughter, thy fears aside,
For here this day shalt thou dine with
me!"

"Now naye, now naye," the fair maiden cried;
"In sooth, Lord Abbot, that scarce may be!

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

"Friends would whisper, and foes would frown,
Sith thou art a Churchman of high degree,
And ill mote it match with thy fair renown
That a wandering damsel dine with thee!

"There is Simon the Deacon hath pulse in
store,

With beans and lettuces fair to see;
His lenten fare now let me share,
I pray thee, Lord Abbot, in charitie!"

—"Though Simon the Deacon hath pulse in
store,

To our patron Saint foul shame it were
Should wayworn guest, with toil oppress'd,
Meet in his Abbey such churlish fare.

"There is Peter the Prior, and Francis the
Friar,

And Roger the Monk shall our convives be;
Small scandal I ween shall then be seen;
They are a goodly companie!"

The Abbot hath donn'd his mitre and ring,
His rich dalmatic, and maniple fine;
And the choristers sing, as the lay-brothers
bring

To the board a magnificent turkey and chine.

The turkey and chine, they are done to a
nicety;

Liver, and gizzard, and all are there;
Ne'er mote Lord Abbot pronounce *Benedicite*
Over more luscious or delicate fare.

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

But no pious stave, no *Pater* or *Ave*
Pronounced, as he gazed on that maiden's
face:

She ask'd him for stuffing, she ask'd him for
gravy,

—She ask'd him for gizzard;—but not for
Grace!

Yet gaily the Lord Abbot smiled, and press'd,
And the blood-red wine in the wine-cup fill'd;
And he help'd his guest to a bit of the breast,
And he sent the drumsticks down to be grill'd.

There was no lack of old Sherris sack,
Of Hippocras fine, or of Malmsey bright;
And aye, as he drain'd off his cup with a smack,
He grew less pious and more polite.

She pledged him once, and she pledged him
twice,
And she drank as Lady ought not to drink;
And he press'd her hand 'neath the table thrice,
And he wink'd as Abbot ought not to wink.

And Peter the Prior, and Francis the Friar,
Sat each with a napkin under his chin;
But Roger the Monk got excessively drunk,
So they put him to bed, and they tuck'd
him in!

The lay-brothers gazed on each other, amazed;
And Simon the Deacon, with grief and
surprise,

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS.

As he peep'd through the key-hole, could scarce
fancy real

The scene he beheld, or believe his own eyes.

In his ear was ringing the Lord Abbot singing,—

He could not distinguish the words very plain,
But 't was all about "Cole", and "jolly old
Soul",

And "Fiddlers", and "Punch", and things
quite as profane.

Even Porter Paul, at the sound of such revelling,

With fervour himself began to bless;

For he thought he must somehow have let the
Devil in,—

And perhaps was not very much out in his
guess.

The Accusing Byers "flew up to Heaven's
Chancery",

Blushing like scarlet with shame and concern;

The Archangel took down his tale, and in
answer he

Wept—(See the works of the late Mr. Sterne).

Indeed, it is said, a less taking both were in

When, after a lapse of a great many years,

They book'd Uncle Toby five shillings for
swearing,

And blotted the fine out again with their
tears!

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

But St. Nicholas' agony who may paint?

His senses at first were well-nigh gone;

The beatified saint was ready to faint

When he saw in his Abbey such sad goings
on!

For never, I ween, had such doings been seen

There before, from the time that most
excellent Prince,

Earl Baldwin of Flanders, and other Com-
manders,

Had built and endowed it some centuries
since.

—But hark!—'t is a sound from the outermost
gate!

A startling sound from a powerful blow.—

Who knocks so late?—it is half after eight

By the clock,—and the clock's five minutes
too slow.

Never, perhaps, had such loud double raps

Been heard in St. Nicholas' Abbey before;

All agreed "it was shocking to keep people
knocking",

But none seem'd inclined to "answer the
door".

Now a louder bang through the cloisters rang,

And the gate on its hinges wide open flew;

And all were aware of a Palmer there,

With his cockle, hat, staff, and his sandal shoe.

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

Many a furrow, and many a frown
By toil and time on his brow were traced;
And his long loose gown was of ginger brown,
And his rosary dangled below his waist.

Now seldom, I ween, is such costume seen,
Except at a stage-play, or masquerade;
But who doth not know it was rather the go
With Pilgrims and Saints, in the second
Crusade?

With noiseless stride did that Palmer glide
Across that oaken floor;
And he made them all jump, he gave such a
thump
Against the Refectory door!

Wide open it flew, and plain to the view
The Lord Abbot they all mote see;
In his hand was a cup, and he lifted it up,
“Here’s the Pope’s good health with three!!”

Rang in their ears three deafening cheers,
“Huzza! huzza! huzza!”
And one of the party said, “Go it, my hearty!”—
When outspake that Pilgrim grey—

“A boon, Lord Abbot! a boon! a boon!
Worn is my foot, and empty my scrip;
And nothing to speak of since yesterday noon
Of food, Lord Abbot, hath pass’d my lip.

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

“And I am come from a far countree,
And have visited many a holy shrine;
And long have I trod the sacred sod
Where the Saints do rest in Palestine!”—

“An thou art come from a far countree,
And if thou in Paynim lands hast been,
Now rede me aright the most wonderful sight,
Thou Palmer grey, that thine eyes have seen.

“Arede me aright the most wonderful sight,
Grey Palmer, that ever thine eyes did see,
And a manchette of bread, and a good warm bed,
And a cup o’ the best shall thy guerdon be!”

“Oh! I have been east, and I have been west,
And I have seen many a wonderful sight;
But never to me did it happen to see
A wonder like that which I see this night!

“To see a Lord Abbot, in rochet and stole,
With Prior and Friar,—a strange mar-velle!—
O’er a jolly full bowl, sitting cheek by jowl,
And hob-nobbing away with a Devil from
Hell!”

He felt in his gown of ginger brown,
And he pull’d out a flask from beneath;
It was rather tough work to get out the cork,
But he drew it at last with his teeth.

O’er a pint and a quarter of holy water,
He made a sacred sign;

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

And he dash'd the whole on the *soi-disant*
daughter
Of old Plantagenet's line!

Oh! then did she reek, and squeak, and shriek,
With a wild unearthly scream;
And fizzl'd, and hiss'd, and produced such a mist,
They were all half-choked by the steam.

Her dove-like eyes turn'd to coals of fire,
Her beautiful nose to a horrible snout,
Her hands to paws, with nasty great claws,
And her bosom went in, and her tail came
out.

On her chin there appear'd a long Nanny-
goat's beard,
And her tusks and her teeth no man mote tell;
And her horns and her hoofs gave infallible
proofs
'T was a frightful fiend from the nethermost
hell!

The Palmer threw down his ginger gown,
His hat and his cockle; and, plain to sight,
Stood St. Nicholas' self, and his shaven crown
Had a glow-worm halo of heavenly light.

The fiend made a grasp, the Abbot to clasp;
But St. Nicholas lifted his holy toe,
And, just in the nick, let fly such a kick
On his elderly Namesake, he made him let go.

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

And out of the window he flew like a shot,
For the foot flew up with a terrible thwack,
And caught the foul demon about the spot
Where his tail joins on to the small of his back.

And he bounded away like a foot-ball at play,
Till into the bottomless pit he fell slap,
Knocking Mammon the meagre o'er pursy
Belphegor,
And Lucifer into Beëlzebub's lap.

Oh! happy the slip from his Succubine grip,
That saved the Lord Abbot,—though, breath-
less with fright,
In escaping he tumbled, and fractured his hip,
And his left leg was shorter thenceforth than
his right!

On the banks of the Rhine, as he's stopping to
dine,
From a certain Inn-window the traveller is
shown
Most picturesque ruins, the scene of these doings,
Some miles up the river, south-east of Cologne.

And, while "*sour-kraut*" she sells you, the
Landlady tells you
That there, in those walls, now all roofless
and bare,
One Simon, a Deacon, from a lean grew a sleek
one,
On filling a *ci-devant* Abbót's state chair.

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

How a *ci-devant* Abbôt, all clothed in drab,
But

Of texture the coarsest, hair shirt, and no
shoes

(His mitre and ring, and all that sort of thing
Laid aside), in yon Cave lived a pious recluse;

How he rose with the sun, limping "dot and
go one",

To yon rill of the mountain, in all sorts of
weather,

Where a Prior and a Friar, who lived some-
what higher,

Up the rock, used to come and eat cresses
together;

How a thirsty old codger, the neighbours
called Roger,

With them drank cold water in lieu of old
wine!

What its quality wanted he made up in
quantity,

Swigging as though he would empty the
Rhine!

And how, as their bodily strength fail'd, the
mental man

Gain'd tenfold vigour and force in all four;
And how, to the day of their death, the "Old
Gentleman"

Never attempted to kidnap them more.

A LAY OF ST. NICHOLAS

And how, when at length, in the odour of
sanctity,

All of them died without grief or complaint;
The Monks of St. Nicholas said 't was ridicu-
lous

Not to suppose every one was a Saint.

And how, in the Abbey, no one was so shabby
As not to say yearly four masses a head,
On the eve of that supper, and kick on the
crupper

Which Satan received, for the souls of the
dead!

How folks long held in reverence their reliques
and memories,

How the *ci-devant* Abbot's obtain'd greater
still,

When some cripples, on touching his fractured
os femoris,

Threw down their crutches, and danced a
quadrille!

And how Abbot Simon (who turn'd out a
prime one),

These words, which grew into a proverb
full soon,

O'er the late Abbot's grotto, stuck up as a
motto,

"WHO SUPPES WITH THE DEVILLE SHOLDE
HAVE A LONG SPOONE!!"

THE END OF THE WORLD

And now, when the world is old,
And the sun is low in the west,
And the moon is high in the east,
And the stars are shining bright,
And the angels are singing sweet,
And the saints are standing fast,
And the Lord is coming near,
And the world is in despair,
And the angels are crying out,
And the saints are shouting loud,
And the Lord is coming now,
And the world is in a glow.

And now, when the world is old,
And the sun is low in the west,
And the moon is high in the east,
And the stars are shining bright,
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And the world is in despair,
And the angels are crying out,
And the saints are shouting loud,
And the Lord is coming now,
And the world is in a glow.

Mr. Barney Maguire's Account of the Coronation

[It was in the summer of 1838 that a party from Tappington reached the metropolis with a view of witnessing the coronation of their youthful Queen, whom God long preserve!—This purpose they were fortunate enough to accomplish by the purchase of a peer's tickets, from a stationer in the Strand, who was enabled so to dispose of some, greatly to the indignation of the hereditary Earl Marshal. How Mr Barney managed to insinuate himself into the Abbey remains a mystery: his characteristic modesty and address doubtless assisted him, for there he unquestionably was. The result of his observations was thus communicated to his associates in the Servants' Hall upon his return, to the infinite delectation of *Mademoiselle Pauline*, over a *Cruiskeen* of his own concocting.]

AIR—"The Groves of Blarney".

Och! the Coronation! what celebration
For emulation can with it compare?
When to Westminster the Royal Spinster,
And the Duke of Leinster, all in order did
repair!
'T was there you'd see the New Polishemen
Making a skirmmage at half after four,

MR. BARNEY MAGUIRE'S

And the Lords and Ladies, and the Miss
O'Gradys,
All standing round before the Abbey door.

Their pillows scorning, that self-same morning
Themselves adorning, all by the candle-light,
With roses and lilies, and daffy-down-dillies,
And gould, and jewels, and rich di'monds
bright.

And then approaches five hundred coaches,
With General Dullbeak.—Och! 't was mighty
fine

To see how asy bould Corporal Casey,
With his sword drawn, prancing, made them
kape the line.

Then the Guns' alarums, and the King of
Arums,

All in his Garters and his Clarence shoes,
Opening the massy doors to the bould Am-
bassydors,

The Prince of Potboys, and great haythen
Jews;

'T would have made you crazy to see Ester-
hazy

All joo'ls from his jasey to his di'mond
boots,

With Alderman Harmer, and that swate
charmer,

The famale heiress, Miss Anjā-ly Coutts.

And Wellington, walking with his swoord
drawn, talking

To Hill and Hardinge, haroes of great fame;

ACCOUNT OF THE CORONATION

And Sir De Lacy, and the Duke Dalmasey, and I
(They call'd him Sowlt afore he changed his
name),

Themselves presading Lord Melbourne, lading
The Queen, the darling, to her royal chair,
And that fine coud fellow, the Duke of Pell-
Mello,

The Queen of Portingal's Chargy-de-fair.

Then the Nóble Prussians, likewise the Rus-
sians,

In fine laced jackets with their goulden
nocuffs,

And the Bavarians, and the proud Hungarians,
And Everythingarians all in furs and muffs.

Then Misthur Spaker, with Misthur Pays the
Quaker,

All in the Gallery you might persave;
But Lord Brougham was missing, and gone
a-fishing,

Ounly crass Lord Essex would not give him
lave.

There was Baron Alten himself exalting,
And Prince Von Schwartzenberg, and many
more,

Och! I'd be bother'd and entirely smother'd
To tell the half of 'em was to the fore;

With the swate Peeresses, in their crowns and
dresses,

And Aldermanesses, and the Boord of Works;
But Mehemet Ali said, quite gintaly,

"I'd be proud to see the likes among the
Turks!"

MR. BARNEY MAGUIRE'S

Then the Queen, Heaven bless her! Och! they
did dress her

In her purple garments and her goulden
Crown;
Like Venus or Hebe, or the Queen of Sheby,
With eight young ladies houlding up her
gown,

Sure 't was grand to see her, also for to he-ar
The big drums bating, and the trumpets
blow,

And Sir George Smart! Oh! he play'd a Con-
sarto,

With his four-and-twenty fiddlers all on a
row!

Then the Lord Archbishop held a goulden
dish up,

For to resave her bounty and great wealth,
Saying, "Plase your Glory, great Queen Vic-
tory!

"Ye'll give the Clargy lave to dhrink your
health!"

Then his Riverence, retrating, discoarsed the
mating;

"Boys! Here's your Queen! deny it if you
can!

And if any bould traitour, or infarior craythur,
Sneezes at that, I'd like to see the man!"

Then the Nobles kneeling to the Pow'rs ap-
pealing,

"Heaven send your Majesty a glorious
reign!"

ACCOUNT OF THE CORONATION

And Sir Claudius Hunter he did confront her,
All in his scarlet gown and goulden chain.
The great Lord May'r, too, sat in his chair, too,
But mighty sarious, looking fit to cry,
For the Earl of Surrey, all in his hurry,
Throwing the thirteens, hit him in his eye.

Then there was preaching, and good store of
speeching,

With Dukes and Marquises on bended knee;
And they did splash her with raal Macasshur,
And the Queen said, "Ah! then thank ye all
for me!"—

Then the trumpets braying, and the organ
playing,

And sweet trombones, with their silver tones;
But Lord Rolle was rolling;—'t was mighty
consoling

To think his Lordship did not break his
bones!

Then the crames and custard, and the beef and
mustard,

All on the tombstones like a poultherer's
shop;

With lobsters and white-bait, and other swate-
meats,

And wine and nagus, and Imparial Pop!

There was cakes and apples in all the Chapels,

With fine polonies, and rich mellow pears,—

Och! the Count Von Strogonoff, sure he got
prog enough,

The sly ould Divil, undernathe the stairs.

ACCOUNT OF THE CORONATION

Then the cannons thunder'd, and the people
wonder'd,

Crying, "God save Victoria, our Royal
Queen!"—

Och! if myself should live to be a hundred,
Sure it's the proudest day that I'll have
seen!

And now, I've ended, what I pretended,
This narration splendid in swate poe-thry,
Ye dear bewitcher, just hand the pitcher,
Faith, it's myself that's getting mighty
dhry!

Hon. Mr. Sucklethumbkin's Story

[It is much to be regretted that I have not as yet been able to discover more than a single specimen of my friend "Sucklethumbkin's" Muse. The event it alludes to, probably the *euthanasia* of the late Mr Greenacre, will scarcely have yet faded from the recollection of an admiring public. Although, with the usual diffidence of a man of fashion, Augustus has "sunk" the fact of his own presence on that interesting occasion, I have every reason to believe, that, in describing the party at the *auberge* hereafter mentioned, he might have said, with a brother Exquisite, "*Quorum pars magna fui*".]

THE EXECUTION

A SPORTING ANECDOTE

My Lord Tomnoddy got up one day;
It was half after two,
He had nothing to do,
So his Lordship rang for his cabriolet.

Tiger Tim

Was clean of limb,
His boots were polish'd, his jacket was trim;

SUCKLETHUMBKIN'S STORY

With a very smart tie in his smart cravat,
And a smart cockade on the top of his hat;
Tallest of boys, or shortest of men,
He stood in his stockings just four foot ten;
And he ask'd, as he held the door on the
swing,
“Pray, did your Lordship please to ring?”

My Lord Tomnoddy he raised his head,
And thus to Tiger Tim he said,
“Malibran's dead,
Duvernay's fled,
Taglioni has not yet arrived in her stead;
Tiger Tim, come tell me true,
What may a Nobleman find to do?”

Tim look'd up, and Tim look'd down,
He paused, and he put on a thoughtful frown,
And he held up his hat, and he peep'd in the
crown;
He bit his lip, and he scratch'd his head,
He let go the handle, and thus he said,
As the door, released, behind him bang'd:
“An't please you, my Lord, there's a man to
be hang'd.”

My Lord Tomnoddy jump'd up at the news,
“Run to M'Fuze,
And Lieutenant Tregooze,
And run to Sir Carnaby Jenks, of the Blues.
Rope-dancers a score
I've seen before—
Madame Sacchi, Antonio, and Master Black-
more;

SUCKLETHUMBKIN'S STORY

But to see a man swing
At the end of a string,
With his neck in a noose, will be quite a new
thing!"

My Lord Tomnoddy stept into his cab—
Dark rifle green, with a lining of drab;

Through street and through square,
His high-trotting mare,

Like one of Ducrow's, goes pawing the air.

Adown Piccadilly and Waterloo Place

Went the high-trotting mare at a very quick
pace;

She produced some alarm,

But did no great harm,

Save frightening a nurse with a child on her
arm,

Splattering with clay

Two urchins at play,

Knocking down—very much to the sweeper's
dismay—

An old woman who wouldn't get out of the
way,

And upsetting a stall

Near Exeter Hall,

Which made all the pious Church-Mission
folks squall.

But eastward afar,

Through Temple Bar,

My Lord Tomnoddy directs his car;

Never heeding their squalls,

Or their calls, or their bawls,

He passes by Waithman's Emporium for
shawls,

SUCKLETHUMBKIN'S STORY

And, merely just catching a glimpse of St.
Paul's,
Turns down the Old Bailey,
Where in front of the gaol, he
Pulls up at the door of the gin-shop, and gaily
Cries,—"What must I fork out to-night, my
trump,
For the whole first-floor of the Magpie and
Stump?"

The clock strikes Twelve—it is dark midnight—
Yet the Magpie and Stump is one blaze of light.
The parties are met;
The tables are set;
There is "punch", "cold *without*", "hot *with*",
"heavy wet",
Ale-glasses and jugs,
And rummers and mugs,
And sand on the floor, without carpets or rugs,
Cold fowl and cigars,
Pickled onions in jars,
Welsh rabbits and kidneys—rare work for the
jaws!—
And very large lobsters, with very large claws;
And there is M'Fuze,
And Lieutenant Tregooze,
And there is Sir Carnaby Jenks, of the Blues,
All come to see a man "die in his shoes!"

The clock strikes One!
Supper is done,
And Sir Carnaby Jenks is full of his fun,
Singing "Jolly companions every one!"

SUCKLETHUMBKIN'S STORY

My Lord Tomnoddy
Is drinking gin-toddy,
And laughing at ev'ry thing, and ev'ry body.—
The clock strikes Two! and the clock strikes
Three!

—"Who so merry, so merry as we?"
Save Captain M'Fuze,
Who is taking a snooze,
While Sir Carnaby Jenks is busy at work,
Blackening his nose with a piece of burnt cork.

The clock strikes Four!—
Round the debtors' door
Are gather'd a couple of thousand or more;
As many await
At the press-yard gate,
Till slowly its folding doors open, and straight
The mob divides, and between their ranks
A waggon comes loaded with posts and with
planks.

The clock strikes Five!
The Sheriffs arrive,
And the crowd is so great that the street seems
alive;
But Sir Carnaby Jenks
Blinks, and winks,
A candle burns down in the socket, and stinks.
Lieutenant Tregooze
Is dreaming of Jews,
And acceptances all the bill-brokers refuse;
My Lord Tomnoddy
Has drunk all his toddy,

SUCKLETHUMBKIN'S STORY

And just as the dawn is beginning to peep,
The whole of the party are fast asleep.

Sweetly, oh! sweetly, the morning breaks,
With roseate streaks,
Like the first faint blush on a maiden's cheeks;
Seem'd as that mild and clear blue sky
Smiled upon all things far and nigh,
On all—save the wretch condemn'd to die!
Alack! that ever so fair a Sun
As that which its course has now begun,
Should rise on such a scene of misery!—
Should gild with rays so light and free
That dismal, dark-frowning Gallows-tree!

And hark!—a sound comes, big with fate;
The clock from St. Sepulchre's tower strikes—
Eight!—

List to that low funereal bell:
It is tolling, alas! a living man's knell!—
And see!—from forth that opening door
They come—HE steps that threshold o'er
Who never shall tread upon threshold more!
—God! 't is a fearsome thing to see
That pale wan man's mute agony,—
The glare of that wild, despairing eye,
Now bent on the crowd, now turn'd to the sky,
As though 'twere scanning, in doubt and in
fear,
The path of the Spirit's unknown career;
Those pinion'd arms, those hands that ne'er
Shall be lifted again,—not even in prayer;
That heaving chest!—Enough—'t is done!

SUCKLETHUMBKIN'S STORY

The bolt has fallen!—the spirit is gone—
For weal or for woe is known but to One!—
—Oh! 't was a fearsome sight!—Ah me!
A deed to shudder at,—not to see.

Again that clock! 't is time, 't is time!
The hour is past: with its earliest chime
The cord is severed, the lifeless clay
By “dungeon villains” is borne away:
Nine!—'t was the last concluding stroke!
And then—my Lord Tomnoddy awoke!
And Tregooze and Sir Carnaby Jenks arose,
And Captain M'Fuze, with the black on his
nose:

And they stared at each other, as much as to
say,

“Hollo! Hollo!

Here's a rum Go!

Why, Captain!—my Lord!—Here's the devil
to pay!

The fellow's been cut down and taken away!

What's to be done?

We've miss'd all the fun!—

Why, they'll laugh at and quiz us all over the
town,

We are all of us done so uncommonly brown!”

What *was* to be done?—'t was perfectly plain
That they could not well hang the man over
again:

What *was* to be done?—The man was dead!
Nought *could* be done—nought could be said;
So—my Lord Tomnoddy went home to bed!

The first of these is the fact that he was born on the 18th of September 1709, at Lichfield, in the County of Stafford. His father was a bookseller, and he was educated at the Lichfield School, and at St. John's College, Oxford.

He was a very early reader, and he was very fond of books. He was also a very early writer, and he was very fond of writing. He was a very early poet, and he was very fond of poetry. He was a very early philosopher, and he was very fond of philosophy. He was a very early statesman, and he was very fond of statesmanship. He was a very early general, and he was very fond of generalship. He was a very early king, and he was very fond of kingship.

He was a very early scholar, and he was very fond of scholarship. He was a very early teacher, and he was very fond of teaching. He was a very early student, and he was very fond of studying. He was a very early friend, and he was very fond of friendship. He was a very early enemy, and he was very fond of enmity. He was a very early lover, and he was very fond of love. He was a very early hater, and he was very fond of hate.

He was a very early hero, and he was very fond of heroism. He was a very early villain, and he was very fond of villainy. He was a very early saint, and he was very fond of sainthood. He was a very early sinner, and he was very fond of sinning. He was a very early angel, and he was very fond of angels. He was a very early devil, and he was very fond of devils.

Sir Rupert the Fearless

A LEGEND OF GERMANY.

[The next in order of these "lays of many lands" refers to a period far earlier in point of date, and has for its scene the banks of what our Teutonic friends are wont to call their "own imperial River"! The incidents which it records afford sufficient proof (and these are days of demonstration), that a propensity to flirtation is not confined to age or country, and that its consequences were not less disastrous to the mail-clad *Ritter* of the dark ages than to the silken courtier of the seventeenth century. The whole narrative bears about it the stamp of truth, and from the papers among which it was discovered I am inclined to think it must have been picked up by Sir Peregrine in the course of one of his valetudinary visits to "The German Spa".]

Sir Rupert the Fearless, a gallant young knight,
Was equally ready to tipple or fight,

Crack a crown, or a bottle;

Cut sirloin, or throttle;

In brief, or as Hume says, "to sum up the
tottle",

Unstain'd by dishonour, unsullied by fear,

All his neighbours pronounced him a *preux*
chevalier.

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

Despite these perfections, corporeal and mental,
He had one slight defect, viz., a rather lean
rental;

Besides, as 'tis own'd there are spots in the
sun,

So it must be confess'd that Sir Rupert had
one;

Being rather unthinking,

He'd scarce sleep a wink in

A night, but addict himself sadly to drinking,

And what moralists say

Is as naughty—to play,

To *Rouge et Noir*, *Hazard*, *Short Whist*,
Ecarté;

Till these, and a few less defensible fancies
Brought the Knight to the end of his slender
finances.

When at length through his boozing,

And tenants refusing

Their rents, swearing "times were so bad they
were losing",

His steward said, "O, sir,

It's some time ago, sir,

Since aught through my hands reach'd the
baker or grocer,

And the tradesmen in general are grown great
complainers".

Sir Rupert the Brave thus addressed his re-
tainers :

"My friends, since the stock
Of my father's old hock

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

Is out, with the Kürchwasser, Barsac, Moselle,
And we're fairly reduced to the pump and the
well,

I presume to suggest,

We shall all find it best

For each to shake hands with his friends ere
he goes,

Mount his horse, if he has one, and—follow his
nose;

As to me, I opine,

Left *sans* money or wine,

My best way is to throw myself into the
Rhine,

Where pitying trav'lers may sigh, as they
cross over,

‘Though he lived a *roué*, yet he died a philo-
sopher.’”

The Knight, having bow'd out his friends thus
politely,

Got into his skiff, the full moon shining
brightly,

By the light of whose beam,

He soon spied on the stream

A dame, whose complexion was fair as new
cream;

Pretty pink silken hose

Cover'd ankles and toes,

In other respects she was scanty of clothes;

For, so says tradition, both written and
oral,

Her *one* garment was loop'd up with bunches
of coral.

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

Full sweetly she sang to a sparkling guitar,
With silver cords stretch'd over Derbyshire
spar,

And she smiled on the Knight,
Who, amazed at the sight,
Soon found his astonishment merged in
delight ;

But the stream by degrees
Now rose up to her knees,
Till at length it invaded her very chemise,
While the heavenly strain, as the wave seem'd
to swallow her,

And slowly she sank, sounded fainter and
hollower ;

—Jumping up in his boat,
And discarding his coat,
“Here goes,” cried Sir Rupert, “by jingo I’ll
follow her !”

Then into the water he plunged with a souse
That was heard quite distinctly by those in the
house.

Down, down, forty fathom and more from the
brink,

Sir Rupert the Fearless continues to sink,
And, as downward he goes,
Still the cold water flows

Through his ears, and his eyes, and his mouth,
and his nose,

Till the rum and the brandy he'd swallow'd
since lunch

Wanted nothing but lemon to fill him with
punch ;

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

Some minutes elapsed since he enter'd the flood,
Ere his heels touch'd the bottom, and stuck in
the mud.

But oh ! what a sight
Met the eyes of the Knight,
When he stood in the depth of the stream
bolt upright !—

A grand stalactite hall
Like the cave of Fingal,
Rose above and about him ;—great fishes and
small
Came thronging around him, regardless of
danger,
And seem'd all agog for a peep at the stranger.

Their figures and forms to describe, language
fails—

They'd such very odd heads, and such very
odd tails ;
Of their genus or species a sample to gain,
You would ransack all Hungerford market in
vain ;

E'en the famed Mr. Myers
Would scarcely find buyers,
Though hundreds of passengers doubtless would
stop
To stare, were such monsters exposed in his
shop.

But little reck'd Rupert these queer-looking
brutes,
Or the efts and the newts
That crawled up his boots,

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

For a sight, beyond any of which I've made
no mention;

In a moment completely absorb'd his attention.
A huge crystal bath, which, with water far
clearer

Than George Robins' filters, or Thorpe's
(which are dearer),

Have ever distill'd,

To the summit was fill'd,

Lay stretch'd out before him,—and every nerve
thrill'd

As scores of young women

Were diving and swimming,

Till the vision a perfect quandary put him
in ;—

All slightly accoutred in gauzes and lawns,
They came floating about him like so many
prawns.

Sir Rupert, who (barring the few peccadilloes
Alluded to) ere he leapt into the billows

Possess'd irreproachable morals, began

To feel rather queer, as a modest young man ;

When forth stepp'd a dame, whom he recog-
nised soon

As the one he had seen by the light of the
moon,

And lis'd, while a soft smile attended each
sentence,

“Sir Rupert, I'm happy to make your ac-
quaintance;

My name is Lurline,

And the ladies you've seen,

All do me the honour to call me their Queen ;

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

I'm delighted to see you, sir, down in the
Rhine here,
And hope you can make it convenient to dine
here."

The Knight blush'd and bow'd,
As he ogled the crowd
Of subaqueous beauties, then answer'd aloud :
"Ma'am, you do me much honour,—I cannot
express
The delight I shall feel—if you'll pardon my
dress—
May I venture to say, when a gentleman
jumps
In the river at midnight for want of 'the
dumps',
He rarely puts on his knee-breeches and
pumps;
If I could but have guess'd—what I sensibly
feel—
Your politeness—I'd not have come *en des-
habille*,
But have put on my silk tights in lieu of my
steel."
Quoth the lady, "Dear sir, no apologies,
pray,
You will take our 'pot-luck' in the family
way;
We can give you a dish
Of some decentish fish;
And our water's thought fairish; but here in
the Rhine
I can't say we pique ourselves much on our
wine."

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

The Knight made a bow more profound than
before,

When a Dory-faced page oped the dining-
room door,

And said, bending his knee,

"Madame, on a servi!"

Rupert tender'd his arm, led Lurline to her
place,

And a fat little Mer-man stood up and said
grace.

What boots it to tell of the viands, or how she
Apologised much for their plain water-soucy,

Want of Harvey's, and Cross's,

And Burgess's sauces?

Or how Rupert, on his side, protested, by
Jove, he

Preferr'd his fish plain, without soy or anchovy.

Suffice it the meal

Boasted trout, perch, and eel,

Besides some remarkably fine salmon peel.

The Knight, sooth to say, thought much less
of the fishes

Than of what they were served on, the massive
gold dishes;

While his eye, as it glanced now and then on
the girls,

Was caught by their persons much less than
their pearls,

And a thought came across him and caused
him to muse,

"If I could but get hold

Of some of that gold,

I might manage to pay off my rascally Jews!"

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

When dinner was done, at a sign to the lasses,
The table was clear'd, and they put on fresh
glasses;

Then the lady addrest

Her redoubtable guest

Much as Dido, of old, did the pious Eneas,

"Dear sir, what induced you to come down
and see us?"—

Rupert gave her a glance most bewitchingly
tender,

Loll'd back in his chair, put his toes on the
fender,

And told her outright

How that he, a young Knight,

Had never been last at a feast or a fight;

But that keeping good cheer

Every day in the year,

And drinking neat wines all the same as small-
beer,

Had exhausted his rent,

And, his money all spent,

How he borrow'd large sums at two hundred
per cent.;

How they follow'd—and then,

The once civillest of men,

Messrs. Howard and Gibbs, made him bitterly
rue it he

'd ever raised money by way of annuity;

And, his mortgages being about to foreclose,

How he jump'd in the river to finish his woes!

Lurline was affected, and own'd, with a tear,

That a story so mournful had ne'er met her ear;

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

Rupert, hearing her sigh,
Look'd uncommonly sly,
And said, with some emphasis, "Ah! miss,
 had I
 A few pounds of those metals,
 You waste here on kettles,
Then, Lord, once again
 Of my spacious domain,
A free Count of the Empire once more I might
reign,
 With Lurline at my side,
 My adorable bride,
(For the parson should come, and the knot
 should be tied;)
No couple so happy on earth should be seen
As Sir Rupert the Brave and his charming
 Lurline;
Not that money's my object—No, hang it!
I scorn it—
And as for my rank—but that *you'd* so adorn
 it—
I'd abandon it all
To remain your true thrall,
And instead of 'the Great', be call'd 'Rupert
 the Small';
—To gain but your smiles, were I Sardanapalus,
I'd descend from my throne, and be boots at
 an alehouse."

Lurline hung her head,
Turn'd pale, and then red,
Growing faint at this sudden proposal to wed,

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

As though his abruptness, in "popping the question"

So soon after dinner, disturb'd her digestion!

Then, averting her eye,

With a lover-like sigh,

"You are welcome," she murmur'd in tones most bewitching,

"To every utensil I have in my kitchen!"

Up started the Knight,

Half mad with delight,

Round her finely-form'd waist

He immediately placed

One arm, which the lady most closely embraced,

Of her lily-white fingers the other made capture,

And he press'd his adored to his bosom with rapture.

"And, oh!" he exclaim'd, "let them go catch my skiff, I

'll be home in a twinkling and back in a jiffy,

Nor one moment procrastinate longer my journey

Than to put up the banns and kick out the attorney."

One kiss to her lip, and one squeeze to her

hand,

And Sir Rupert already was half-way to land,

For a sour-visaged Triton,

With features would frighten

Old Nick, caught him up in one hand, though no light one,

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

Sprang up through the waves, popp'd him into
his funny,
Which some others already had half-fill'd with
money;
In fact, 't was so heavily laden with ore
And pearls, 't was a mercy he got it to shore:
But Sir Rupert was strong,
And while pulling along,
Still he heard, faintly sounding, the water-
nymphs' song.

LAY OF THE NAIADS

“Away! away! to the mountain's brow,
Where the castle is darkly frowning;
And the vassals, all in goodly row,
Weep for their lord a-drowning!
Away! away! to the steward's room,
Where law with its wig and robe is;
Throw us out John Doe and Richard Roe,
And sweetly we'll tickle their tobies!”

The unearthly voices scarce had ceased their
yelling,
When Rupert reach'd his old baronial dwell-
ing.

What rejoicing was there!
How the vassals did stare!
The old housekeeper put a clean shirt down to
air,
For she saw by her lamp
That her master's was damp,

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

And she fear'd he'd catch cold, and lumbago,
and cramp;

But, scorning what she did,

The Knight never heeded

Wet jacket or trousers, nor thought of re-
pinning,

Since their pockets had got such a delicate
lining.

But oh! what dismay

Fill'd the tribe of *Ca Sa*,

When they found he'd the cash, and intended
to pay!

Away went "*cognovits*", "*bills*", "*bonds*",
and "*escheats*",—

Rupert clear'd off all scores, and took proper
receipts.

Now no more he sends out

For pots of brown stout,

Or *schnaps*, but resolves to do henceforth with-
out,

Abjure from this hour all excess and ebriety,

Enrol himself one of a Temp'rance Society,

All riot eschew,

Begin life anew,

And new-cushion and hassock the family pew!

Nay, to strengthen him more in his new mode
of life

He boldly determines to take him a wife.

Now, many would think that the Knight, from
a nice sense

Of honour, should put Lurline's name in the
licence,

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

And that, for a man of his breeding and quality,
To break faith and troth,
Confirm'd by an oath,
Is not quite consistent with rigid morality;
But whether the nymph was forgot, or he
thought her
From her essence scarce wife, but at best wife-
and-water,
And declined as unsuited,
A bride so diluted—
Be this as it may,
He, I'm sorry to say,
(For, all things consider'd, I own 't was a rum
thing,)
Made proposals in form to Miss *Una Von*—
something
(Her name has escaped me), sole heiress, and
niece
To a highly respectable Justice of Peace.
“Thrice happy's the wooing
That's not long a-doing!”
So much time is saved in the billing and
cooing—
The ring is now bought, the white favours, and
gloves,
And all the *et cetera* which crown people's loves;
A magnificent bride-cake comes home from the
baker,
And lastly appears, from the German Long Acre,
That shaft which the sharpest in all Cupid's
quiver is,
A plum-colour'd coach, and rich Pompadour
liveries.

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

'T was a comely sight

To behold the Knight,

With his beautiful bride, dress'd all in white,
And the bridemaids fair with their long lace

veils,

As they all walk'd up to the altar rails,

While nice little boys, the incense dispensers,

March'd in front with white surplices, bands,

and gilt censers.

With a gracious air, and a smiling look,

Mess John had open'd his awful book,

And had read so far as to ask if to wed he

meant?

And if "he knew any just cause or impedi-

ment?"

When from base to turret the castle shook!!!

Then came a sound of a mighty rain

Dashing against each storied pane;

The wind blew loud,

And a coal-black cloud

O'ershadow'd the church, and the party, and

crowd;

How it could happen they could not divine,

The morning had been so remarkably fine!

Still the darkness increased, till it reach'd such
a pass

That the sextoness hasten'd to turn on the
gas;

But harder it pour'd,

And the thunder roar'd,

As if heaven and earth were coming together:

None ever had witness'd such terrible weather.

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

Now louder it crash'd,
And the lightning flash'd,
Exciting the fears
Of the sweet little dears.
In the veils, as it danced on the brass chandeliers;
The parson ran off, though a stout-hearted Saxon,
When he found that a flash had set fire to his caxon.

Though all the rest trembled, as might be expected,
Sir Rupert was perfectly cool and collected,
And endeavour'd to cheer
His bride, in her ear
Whisp'ring tenderly, "Pray don't be frighten'd,
my dear;
Should it even set fire to the castle, and burn it, you're
Amply insured both for buildings and furniture."

But now, from without,
A trustworthy scout
Rush'd hurriedly in,
Wet through to the skin,
Informing his master "the river was rising,
And flooding the grounds in a way quite surprising".

He'd no time to say more,
For already the roar
Of the waters was heard as they reach'd the church-door,

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

While, high on the first wave that roll'd in,
 was seen,
Riding proudly, the form of the angry Lurline;
And all might observe, by her glance fierce and
 stormy,
She was stung by the *spretæ injuria formæ*.

What she said to the Knight, what she said to
 the bride,
What she said to the ladies who stood by her
 side,
What she said to the nice little boys in white
 clothes,
Oh, nobody mentions,—for nobody knows;
For the roof tumbled in, and the walls tumbled
 out,
And the folks tumbled down, all confusion and
 rout,
 The rain kept on pouring,
 The flood kept on roaring,
The billows and water-nymphs roll'd more and
 more in;
 Ere the close of the day
 All was clean wash'd away—
One only survived who could hand down the
 news,
A little old woman that open'd the pews;
 She was borne off, but stuck,
 By the greatest good luck,
In an oak-tree, and there she hung, crying and
 screaming,
And saw all the rest swallow'd up the wild
 stream in;
In vain, all the week,

SIR RUPERT THE FEARLESS

Did the fishermen seek
For the bodies, and poke in each cranny and
creek;
In vain was their search

After aught in the church,
They caught nothing but weeds, and perhaps a
few perch;

The Humane Society
Tried a variety
Of methods; and brought down, to drag for the
wreck, tackles,
But they only fish'd up the clerk's tortoiseshell
spectacles.

MORAL

This tale has a moral: Ye youths, oh, beware
Of liquor, and how you run after the fair!
Shun playing at *shorts*—avoid quarrels and jars—
And don't take to smoking those nasty cigars!
—Let no run of bad luck, or despair for some
Jewess-eyed

Damsel, induce you to contemplate suicide!
Don't sit up much later than ten or eleven!—
Be up in the morning by half after seven!
Keep from flirting—nor risk, warned by Rupert's
miscarriage,

An action for breach of a promise of marriage;—
Don't fancy odd fishes!
Don't prig silver dishes!
And to sum up the whole, in the shortest
phrase I know,

BEWARE OF THE RHINE, AND TAKE CARE OF THE
RHINO!

The Merchant of Venice

A LEGEND OF ITALY

[And now for "Sunny Italy"—the "Land of the unforgotten brave",—the land of blue skies and black-eyed Signoras.—I cannot discover from any recorded memoranda that "Uncle Perry" was ever in Venice, even in Carnival time—that he ever saw Garrick in Shylock I do not believe, and am satisfied that he knew nothing of Shakspeare, a circumstance that would by no means disqualify him from publishing an edition of that Poet's works. I can only conclude that, in the course of his Continental wanderings, Sir Peregrine had either read, or heard of the following history, especially as he furnishes us with some particulars of the eventual destination of his *dramatis personee* which the Bard of Avon has omitted. If this solution be not accepted, I can only say, with Mr. Puff, that probably "two men hit upon the same idea, and Shakspeare made use of it first".]

. . . Of the Merchant of Venice there are two 4to. editions in 1600, one by Heyes and the other by Roberts. The Duke of Devonshire and Lord Francis Egerton have copies of the edition by Heyes, and *they vary importantly*.

. . . It must be acknowledged that *this* is a very easy and happy emendation, which does not admit of a moment's doubt or dispute.

. . . Readers in general are not at all aware of the

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

nonsense they have in many cases been accustomed to receive as the genuine text of Shakspeare!

Reasons for a new edition of Shakspeare's Works, by J. Payne Collier.

I believe there are few
But have heard of a Jew,
Named Shylock, of Venice, as arrant a "screw"
In money transactions, as ever you knew;
An exorbitant miser, who never yet lent
A ducat at less than three hundred per cent.,
Insomuch that the veriest spendthrift in Venice,
Who 'd take no more care of his pounds than
his pennies,
When press'd for a loan, at the very first sight
Of his terms, would back out, and take refuge
in *Flight*.
It is not my purpose to pause and inquire
If he might not, in managing thus to retire,
Jump out of the frying-pan into the fire;
Suffice it, that folks would have nothing to do,
Who could possibly help it, with Shylock the
Jew.

But, however discreetly one cuts and contrives,
We've been most of us taught, in the course of
our lives,
That "Needs must when the Elderly Gentle-
man drives!"
In proof of this rule,
A thoughtless young fool,
Bassanio, a Lord of the Tom-noddy school,
Who, by showing at Operas, Balls, Plays, and
Court,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

A "swelling" (Payne Collier would read
"swilling") "port",
And inviting his friends to dine, breakfast, and
sup,
Had shrunk his "weak means", and was
"stump'd" and "hard up",
Took occasion to send
To his very good friend.

Antonio, a merchant whose wealth had no end,
And who'd often before had the kindness to
lend
Him large sums, on his note, which he'd
managed to spend.

"Antonio," said he,

"Now listen to me;

I've just hit on a scheme which, I think, you'll
agree,

All matters considered, is no bad design,
And which, if it succeeds, will suit your book
and mine.

In the first place, you know all the money
I've got,

Time and often, from you has been long gone
to pot,

And in making those loans you have made a
bad shot;

Now do as the boys do when, shooting at
sparrows

And tom-tits, they chance to lose one of their
arrows,

—Shoot another the same way—I'll watch
well its track,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

And, turtle to tripe, I'll bring both of them
back!—

So list to my plan,
And do what you can

To attend to and second it, that's a good man!

“There's a Lady, young, handsome beyond
all compare, at

A place they call Belmont, whom, when I was
there, at

The suppers and parties my friend Lord
Mountferrat

Was giving last season, we all used to stare at.
Then, as to her wealth, her Solicitor told mine,
Besides vast estates, a pearl-fishery, and gold
mine,

Her iron strong box
Seems bursting its locks,

It's stuffed so with shares in ‘Grand Junc-
tions’ and ‘Docks’,

Not to speak of the money she's got in the
Stocks,

French, Dutch, and Brazilian,
Columbian, and Chilian,

In English Exchequer-bills full half a million,
Not ‘kites’, manufactured to cheat and in-
veigle,

But the right sort of ‘flimsy’, all sign'd by
Monteagle.

Then I know not how much in Canal-shares
and Railways,

And more speculations I need not detail, ways
Of vesting which, if not so safe as some think
'em,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Contribute a deal to improving one's income;

In short, she's a Mint!

—Now I say, deuce is in't!

If, with all my experience, I can't take a hint,
And her "eye's speechless messages", plainer
Than print

At the time that I told you of, know from
a squint.

In short, my dear Tony,

My trusty old crony,
Do stump up three thousand once more as a
loan—I

Am sure of my game—though, of course,
there are brutes,

Of all sorts and sizes, preferring their suits
To her, you may call the Italian Miss Coutts,
Yet Portia—she's named from that daughter
of Cato's—

Is not to be snapp'd up like little potatoes;
And I have not a doubt

I shall rout every lout

Ere you'll whisper Jack Robinson—cut them
ball out—

Surmount every barrier,

Carry her, marry her!
—Then hey! my old Tony, when once fairly
noosed,

For her Three-and-a-half per Cents—New and
Reduced!"

With a wink of his eye

His friend made reply
In his jocular manner, sly, caustic, and dry,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

“Still the same boy, Bassanio—never say
‘die’!

—Well—I hardly know how I shall do’t, but
I’ll try,—

Don’t suppose my affairs are at all in a hash,
But the fact is, at present I’m quite out of
cash;

The bulk of my property, merged in rich
cargoes, is

Tossing about, as you know, in my Argosies,
Tending, of course, my resources to cripple,
—I

’ve one bound to England,—another to Tri-
poli—

Cyprus—Masulipatam—and Bombay;—

A sixth, by the way,

I consigned t’other day,

To Sir Gregor M’Gregor, Cacique of Poyais,
A country where silver’s as common as
clay.

Meantime, till they tack,

And come, some of them, back,

What with Custom-house duties, and bills
falling due,

My account with Jones Loyd and Co., looks
rather blue;

While, as for the ‘ready’, I’m like a Church-
mouse,—

I really don’t think there’s five pounds in the
house.

But, no matter for that,

Let me just get my hat,

And my new silk umbrella that stands on the
mat,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

And we'll go forth at once to the market—we
two,—

And try what my credit in Venice can do;
I stand well on 'Change, and, when all's said
and done, I

Don't doubt I shall get it for love or for
money."

They were going to go,

When, lo! down below,

In the street, they heard somebody crying,
"Old Clo'!"

—"By the Pope, there's the man for our
purpose!—I knew

We should not have to search long. Solanio,
run you,

—Salarino,—quick!—haste! ere he get out of
view,

And call in that scoundrel, old Shylock the
Jew!"

With a pack,

Like a sack

Of old clothes at his back,

And three hats on his head, Shylock came in a
crack,

Saying, "Rest you fair, Signior Antonio!—vat,
pray,

Might your vorship be pleased for to vant in
ma vay?"

—"Why, Shylock, although,

As you very well know,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

I am what they call 'warm',—pay my way as
I go,
And, as to myself, neither borrow nor lend;
I can break through a rule to oblige an old
friend;
And that's the case now—Lord Bassanio
would raise
Some three thousand ducats—well,—knowing
your ways,
And that nought's to be got from you, say
what one will,
Unless you've a couple of names to the bill,
Why, for once, I'll put mine to it,
Yea, seal and sign to it—
Now, then, old Sinner, let's hear what you'll
say
As to 'doing' a bill at three months from
to-day?
Three thousand gold ducats, mind—all in
good bags
Of hard money—no sealing-wax, slippers, or
rags?"

"—Vell, ma tear," says the Jew,
"I'll see vat I can do!
But Mishter Antonio, hark you, 'tish funny
You say to me, 'Shylock, ma tear, ve'd have
money!'
Ven you very vell knows
How you shpit on ma clothes,
And use naughty vords—call me Dog—and
avouch
Dat I put too much int'resht py half in ma
pouch,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

And while I, like de resht of ma tribe, shrug
and crouch,
You find fault mit ma pargains, and say I'm a
Smouch.

—Vell!—no matters, ma tear,—
Von vord in your ear!
I'd be friends mit you bote—and to make dat
appear,

Vy, I'll find you de monies as soon as you
vill,

Only von littel joke musht be put in de pill;—

Ma tear, you musht say,
If on such and such day
Such sum or such sums, you shall fail to
repay,
I shall cut where I like, as de pargain is proke,
A fair pound of your flesh—chest by vay of a
joke.”

So novel a clause
Caused Bassanio to pause;
But Antonio, like most of those sage “Johnny
Raws”

Who care not three straws
About Lawyers or Laws,
And think cheaply of “Old Father Antic”,
because

They have never experienced a gripe from his
claws,
“Pooh pooh'd” the whole thing.—“Let the
Smouch have his way—

Why, what care I, pray,
For his penalty?—Nay,
It's a forfeit he'd never expect me to pay;

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

And, come what come may,
I hardly need say
My ships will be back a full month ere the
day."

So, anxious to see his friend off on his
journey,
And thinking the whole but a paltry concern,
he

Affix'd with all speed
His name to a deed,
Duly stamp'd and drawn up by a sharp Jew
attorney.

Thus again furnish'd forth, Lord Bassanio,
instead

Of squandering the cash, after giving one
spread,

With fiddling and masques, at the Saracen's
Head,

In the morning "made play",
And without more delay,
Started off in the steam-boat for Belmont next
day.

But scarcely had he
From the harbour got free,
And left the Lagunes for the broad open sea,
Ere the 'Change and Rialto both rung with
the news

That he'd carried off more than mere cash
from the Jew's.

Though Shylock was old,
And, if rolling in gold,
Was as ugly a dog as you'd wish to behold,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

For few in his tribe 'mongst their Levis and
Moseses

Sported so Jewish an eye, beard, and nose as his,
Still, whate'er the opinions of Horace and
some be,

Your *aquilæ* generate sometimes *Columbæ*,
Like Jephthah, as Hamlet says, he'd "one fair
daughter",

And every gallant, who caught sight of her,
thought her

A jewel—a gem of the very first water;

A great many sought her,

Till one at last caught her,

And, upsetting all that the Rabbis had taught
her,

To feelings so truly reciprocal brought her,

That the very same night

Bassanio thought right

To give all his old friends that farewell
"invite",

And while Shylock was gone there to feed out
of spite,

On "wings made by a tailor" the damsel took
flight.

By these "wings" I'd express

A grey duffle dress,

With brass badge and muffin cap, made, as by
rule,

For an upper class boy in the National School.

Jessy ransack'd the house, popp'd her breeks
on, and when so

Disguised, bolted off with her beau—one
Lorenzo,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

An "Unthrift", who lost not a moment in
whisking

Her into the boat,

And was fairly afloat

Ere her pa had got rid of the smell of the
griskin.

Next day, while old Shylock was making a
racket,

And threatening how well he'd dust every
man's jacket

Who'd help'd her in getting aboard of the
packet,

Bassanio at Belmont was capering and pranc-
ling,

And bowing, and scraping, and singing, and
dancing,

Making eyes at Miss Portia, and doing his
best

To perform the polite, and to cut out the
rest;

And, if left to herself, he no doubt had
succeeded,

For none of them waltz'd so genteelly as he
did;

But an obstacle lay,
Of some weight, in his way,

The defunct Mr. P., who was now turned to
clay,

Had been an odd man, and, though all for the
best he meant,

Left but a queer sort of "Last will and testa-
ment",—

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Bequeathing her hand,
 With her houses and land,
 &c., from motives one don't understand,
 As she rev'renced his memory, and valued his
 blessing,

To him who should turn out the best hand at
 guessing!

Like a good girl, she did

Just what she was bid;

In one of three caskets her picture she hid,
 And clapp'd a conundrum a-top of each lid.

A couple of Princes, a black and a white
 one,

Tried first, but they both fail'd in choosing
 the right one.

Another from Naples, who shoe'd his own
 horses;

A French Lord, whose graces might vie with
 Count D'Orsay's;—

A young English Baron;—a Scotch Peer his
 neighbour:—

A dull drunken Saxon, all moustach'd and
 sabre;—

All follow'd, and all had their pains for their
 labour.

Bassanio came last—happy man be his dole!

Put his conjuring cap on,—consider'd the
 whole,—

The gold put aside as

Mere “hard food for Midas”,

The silver bade trudge

As a “pale common drudge”;

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Then choosing the little lead box in the
middle,
Came plump on the picture, and found out
the riddle:
Now you're not such a goose as to think, I
dare say,
Gentle Reader, that all this was done in a
day,
Any more than the dome
Of St. Peter's at Rome
Was built in the same space of time; and, in
fact,
Whilst Bassanio was doing
His billing and cooing,
Three months had gone by ere he reach'd the
fifth act;
Meanwhile that unfortunate bill became due,
Which his Lordship had almost forgot, to the
Jew,
And Antonio grew
In a deuce of a stew,
For he could not cash up, spite of all he could
do;
(The bitter old Israelite would not renew,)
What with contrary winds, storms, and wrecks,
and embargoes, his
Funds were all stopp'd, or gone down in his
argosies,
None of the set having come into port,
And Shylock's attorney was moving the Court
For the forfeit supposed to be set down in
sport.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

The serious news
Of this step of the Jew's,
And his fix'd resolution all terms to refuse,
Gave the newly-made Bridegroom a fit of
"the Blues",
Especially, too, as it came from the pen
Of his poor friend himself on the wedding-
day,—then,
When the Parson had scarce shut his book up,
and when
The Clerk was yet uttering the final Amèn.²—

"Dear Friend," it continued, "all's up with
me—I
Have nothing on earth now to do but to die!
And, as death clears all scores, you're no
longer my debtor;
I should take it as kind
Could you come—never mind—
If your love don't persuade you, why,—don't
let this letter!"

I hardly need say this was scarcely read o'er
Ere a post-chaise and four
Was brought round to the door,
And Bassanio, though, doubtless, he thought
it a bore,
Gave his lady one kiss, and then started at
score.
But scarce in his flight
Had he got out of sight
Ere Portia, addressing a groom, said, "My
lad, you a
Journey must take on the instant to Padua;

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Find out there Bellario, a Doctor of Laws,
 Who, like Follett, is never left out of a cause,
 And give him this note,
 Which I've hastily wrote,
 Take the papers he'll give you—then push for
 the ferry
 Below, where I'll meet you—you'll do't in
 a wherry,
 If you can't find a boat on the Brenta with
 sails to it—
 —Stay, bring his gown too, and wig with
 three tails to it."

Giovanni (that's Jack)
 Brought out his hack,
 Made a bow to his mistress, then jump'd on
 its back,
 Put his hand to his hat, and was off in a
 crack.
 The Signora soon follow'd, herself, taking, as
 her

Own escort Nerissa, her maid, and Balthasar.
 "The Court is prepared, the Lawyers are met,
 The Judges all ranged, a terrible show!"
 As Captain Macheath says,—and when one's
 in debt,

The sight's as unpleasant a one as I know,
 Yet still not so bad after all, I suppose,
 As if, when one cannot discharge what one
 owes,
 They should bid people cut off one's toes or
 one's nose;

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Yet here, a worse fate,
 Stands Antonio, of late
 A Merchant, might vie e'en with Princes in
 state,
 With his waistcoat unbutton'd, prepared for
 the knife,
 Which, in taking a pound of flesh, must take
 his life;
 —On the other side Shylock, his bag on the
 floor,
 And three shocking bad hats on his head, as
 before,
 Imperturbable stands,
 As he waits their commands,
 With his scales and his great *snickersnee* in his
 hands:
 —Between them, equipt in a wig, gown, and
 bands,
 With a very smooth face, a young dandified
 Lawyer,
 Whose air, ne'ertheless, speaks him quite a
 top-sawyer,
 Though his hopes are but feeble,
 Does his *possible*
 To make the hard Hebrew to mercy incline,
 And in lieu of his three thousand ducats take
 nine,
 Which Bassanio, for reasons we well may divine,
 Shows in so many bags all drawn up in a line.
 But vain are all efforts to soften him—still
 He points to the bond,
 He so often has conn'd,
 And says in plain terms he'll be shot if he
 will.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

So the dandified Lawyer, with talking-grown
hoarse,
Says, "*I can* say no more—let the law take its
course."

Just fancy the gleam of the eye of the Jew,
As he sharpen'd his knife on the sole of his
shoe

From the toe to the heel,
And grasping the steel,
With a business-like air was beginning to feel
Whereabouts he should cut, as a butcher would
veal,
When the dandified Judge puts a spoke in his
wheel.

"Stay, Shylock," says he,
"Here's one thing—you see
This bond of yours gives you here no jot of
blood!

—The words are 'A pound of flesh',—that's
clear as mud—

Slice away, then, old fellow—but mind!—if
you spill

One drop of his claret that's not in your bill,
I'll hang you, like Haman!—by Jingo I will!"

When apprised of this flaw,
You never yet saw
Such an awfully mark'd elongation of jaw
As in Shylock, who cried, "Plesh ma heart!
ish dat law?"—

Off went his three hats,
And he look'd as the cats

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Do, whenever a mouse has escaped from their
claw.

“—Ish’t the law?”—why the thing won’t
admit of a query—

“No doubt of the fact,

Only look at the act;

Acto quinto, cap: tertio, Dogi Falieri—

Nay, if, rather than cut, you’d relinquish the
debt,

The Law, Master Shy, has a hold on you yet.

See Foscari’s ‘Statutes at large’—‘If a Stranger

A Citizen’s life shall, with malice, endanger,

The whole of his property, little or great,

Shall go, on conviction, one half to the State,

And one to the person pursued by his hate;

And, not to create

Any farther debate,

The Doge, if he pleases, may cut off his pate’.

So, down on your marrowbones, Jew, and ask
mercy!

Defendant and Plaintiff are now *wisy wersy*.”

What need to declare

How pleased they all were

At so joyful an end to so sad an affair?

Or Bassanio’s delight at the turn things had taken,

His friend, having saved, to the letter, his
bacon?—

How Shylock got shaved, and turn’d Christian,
though late,

To save a life-int’rest in half his estate?—

How the dandified Lawyer, who’d managed

the thing,

Would not take any fee for his pains but a ring

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Which Mrs. Bassanio had giv'n to her spouse,
With injunctions to keep it, on leaving the
house?—

How when he, and the spark

Who appeared as his clerk,

Had thrown off their wigs, and their gowns,
and their jetty coats,

There stood Nerissa and Portia in petticoats?—

How they pouted, and flouted, and acted the
cruel, Lord Bassanio had not kept his

Because Lord Bassanio had not kept his
jewel?—

How they scolded and broke out,

Till, having their joke out,

They kissed, and were friends, and, all bless-
ing and blessed,

Drove home by the light

Of a moonshiny night,

Like the one in which Troilus, the brave Tro-
jan knight,

Sat astride on a wall, and sigh'd after his
Cressid?—

All this, if't were meet,

I'd go on to repeat,

But a story spun out so's by no means a treat;
So, I'll merely relate what, in spite of the pains

I have taken to rummage among his remains,
No edition of Shakspeare, I've met with, con-
tains;

But, if the account which I've heard be the
true one,

We shall have it, no doubt, before long, in a
new one.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

In an MS., then, sold—
For its full weight in gold,
And knock'd down to my friend, Lord Tom-
noddy, I'm told
It's recorded that Jessy, coquettish and vain,
Gave her husband, Lorenzo, a good deal of
pain;
Being mildly rebuked, she levanted again,
Ran away with a Scotchman, and, crossing the
main,
Became known by the name of the "Flower of
Dumblane".
That Antonio, whose piety caused, as we've
seen,
Him to spit upon every old Jew's gaberdine,
And whose goodness to paint
All colours were faint,
Acquired the well-merited prefix of "Saint",
And the Doge, his admirer, of honour the
fount,
Having given him a patent, and made him a
Count,
He went over to England, got nat'ralis'd there,
And espous'd a rich heiress in Hanover Square.
That Shylock came with him, no longer a Jew,
But converted, I think may be possibly true,
But that Walpole, as these self-same papers
By changing the y in his name into *er*,
Should allow him a fictitious surname to dish
up,
And in Seventeen-twenty-eight make him a
Bishop,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

I cannot believe—but shall still think them
two men
Till some Sage proves the fact “with his usual
acumen”.

MORAL.

From this tale of the Bard
It's uncommonly hard
If an Editor can't draw a moral.—'T is clear,
Then,—In ev'ry young wife-seeking Bachelor's
ear

A maxim, 'bove all other stories, this one
drums,
“PITCH GREEK TO OLD HARRY, AND STICK TO
CONUNDRUMS!!”

To new-married Ladies this lesson it teaches,
“You're ‘no that far wrong’ in assuming the
breeches!”

Monied men upon 'Change, and rich Mer-
chants it schools.

To look well to assets—nor play with edge
tools!

Last of all, this remarkable History shows men,
What caution they need when they deal with
old-clothesmen!

So bid John and Mary
To mind and be wary,
And never let one of them come down the
are'!

The Ingoldsby Penance!

A LEGEND OF PALESTINE AND— WEST KENT

[In the windows of the great Hall, as well as in those of the long Gallery, and the Library at Tappington, are, and have been many of them from a very early period, various “storied panes” of stained glass, which, as Blue Dick’s¹ exploits did not extend beyond the neighbouring city, have remained unfractured down to the present time. Among the numerous escutcheons there displayed, charged with armorial bearings of the family and its connexions, is one in which a *chevron between three eagles’ cuisses, sable*, is blazoned quarterly with the *engrailed saltire* of the Ingoldsbys. Mr. Simpkinson from Bath;—whose merits as an antiquary are so well known and appreciated as to make eulogy superfluous, not to say impertinent,—has been for some time bringing his heraldic lore to bear on those *monumenta vetusta*. He pronounces the coat

¹ Richard Culmer, parson of Chartham, commonly so called, distinguished himself, while Laud was in the Tower, by breaking the beautiful windows in Canterbury Cathedral, “standing on the top of the city ladder, near sixty steps high, with a whole pike in his hand, when others would not venture so high”. This feat of Vandalism the cærulean worthy called “rattling down proud Becket’s glassie bones”.

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

in question to be that of a certain Sir Ingoldsby Bray who flourished *temp. Ric. I.*, and founded the Abbey of Ingoldsby, in the county of Kent and diocese of Rochester, early in the reign of that monarch's successor. The history of the origin of that pious establishment has been rescued from the dirt and mildew in which its chartularies have been slumbering for centuries, and is here given. The link of connexion between the two families is shown by the accompanying extract from our genealogical tree.

Peter de Ingoldsby, Lord of Tappington

temp.: Stephen, killed at the battle of

Lincoln, *ex parte regis.*

Vitalis de Engaine.	Alice de Lizures,	Geoffrey de Brai.	Joan dau. only of Tappington a-dau. foresaid.	Richard Ingoldsby, 2d wife.
			HODIERNUS INGOLDSBY.	

Alicia=Ingoldsby de Bray; Chiv'-si Reginald de Bray, 2d dau. & heir, afterwards assumed his son, heir to his brother, his mother's name, from whom sus: founder of Ingoldsby descended Edmund per Abbey, A.D. 1202, ob. Lord Bray, summoned to Parliament 21 to 28 coll: S. P. *circiter* 1214. Hen. 8.

In this document it will be perceived that the death of Lady Alice Ingoldsby is attributed to strangulation superinduced by suspension, whereas in the veritable legend annexed no allusion is made to the intervention of a halter: Unluckily Sir Ingoldsby left no issue, or we might now be "calling

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Cousins" with (*ci-devant*) Mrs. Otway Cave, in whose favour the abeyance of the old Barony of Bray has recently been determined by the Crown. To this same Barony we ourselves were not without our pretensions, and, *teste Simpkinson*, had "as good a right to it as any body else." The "Collective wisdom of the Country" has, however, decided the point, and placed us among that very numerous class of claimants who are "wrongfully kept out of their property and dignities—by the right owners".

I seize with pleasure this opportunity of contradicting a malicious report that Mr. Simpkinson has, in a late publication, confounded King Henry the Fifth with the Duke of Monmouth; and positively deny that he has ever represented Walter Lord Clifford, (father to Fair Rosamond,) as the leader of the O. P. row.]

I'll devise thee brave punishments for him!

—SHAKESPEARE.

Out and spake Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
A stalwart knight, I ween, was he,
"Come east, come west,
Come lance in rest,
Come falchion in hand, I'll tickle the best
Of all the Soldan's Chivalrie!"

Oh! they came west, and they came east,
Twenty-four Emirs and Sheiks at the least,
And they hammer'd away
At Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
Fall back, fall edge, cut, thrust, and point,—
But he topp'd off head, and he lopp'd off joint;
Twenty and three,
Of high degree,

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Lay stark and stiff on the crimson'd lea,
All—all save one—and he ran up a tree!
“Now count them, my Squire, now count them
and see!”

“Twenty and three!
Twenty and three!—
All of them Nobles of high degree;
There they be lying on Ascalon lea!”

Out and spake Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
“What news? what news? come, tell to me!
What news? what news, thou little Foot-page?—
I've been whacking the foe, till it seems an age
Since I was in Ingoldsby Hall so free!
What news? what news from Ingoldsby Hall?
Come tell me now, thou Page so small!”

“Oh, Hawk and Hound
Are safe and sound;
Beast in byre and Steed in stall;
And the Watch-dog's bark,
As soon as it's dark,
Bays wakeful guard around Ingoldsby Hall!”

—“I care not a pound
For Hawk or for Hound,
For Steed in stall, or for Watch-dog's bay:
Fain would I hear
Of my dainty dear;
How fares Dame Alice, my Lady gay?”—
Sir Ingoldsby Bray, he said in his rage,
“What news? what news? thou naughty Foot-
page!”—

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

That little Foot-page full low crouch'd he,
And he doff'd his cap, and he bended his knee,
“Now lithe and listen, Sir Bray, to me :

Lady Alice sits lonely in bower and hall,
Her sighs they rise, and her tears they fall :

She sits alone,

And she makes her moan ;

Dance and song

She considers quite wrong ;

Feast and revel

Mere snares of the devil ;

She mendeth her hose, and she crieth ‘Alack !

When will Sir Ingoldsby Bray come back ?”

“Thou liest ! thou ließt, thou naughty Foot-
page,

Full loud dost thou lie, false Page, to me !

There, in thy breast,

’Neath thy silken vest,

What scroll is that, false Page, I see ?”

Sir Ingoldsby Bray in his rage drew near,

That little Foot-page he blench’d with fear ;

“Now where may the Prior of Abingdon lie ?

King Richard’s Confessor, I ween, is he ;

And tidings rare

To him do I bear,

And news of price from his rich Ab-bee !”

“Now nay, now nay, thou naughty Page !

No learned clerk, I trow, am I,

But well, I ween,

May there be seen

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Dame Alice's hand with half an eye; and
Now nay, now nay, thou naughty Page, and
From Abingdon Abbey comes not thy news;

Although no clerk, I know all this
: Well may I mark! the particular turn of her P's and her Q's!"

Sir Ingoldsby Bray, in his fury and rage,
By the back of the neck takes that little Foot-
page;

The scroll he seizes, the Page he squeezes,
And buffets, and pinches his nose till he
sneezes;

Then he cuts with his dagger the silken threads
Which they used in those days, 'stead of little
Queen's heads.

When the contents of the scroll met his view,
Sir Ingoldsby Bray in a passion grew,
Backward he drew
His mailed shoe,
And he kicked that naughty Foot-page, that he
flew

Like a cloth-yard shaft from a bended yew,
I may not say whither—I never knew!

"Now count the slain
Upon Ascalon plain,—
Go count them, my Squire, go count them
Again!"

"Twenty and three!
There they be,

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Stiff and stark on that crimson'd lea!
 Twenty and three?
 —Stay—let me see!
 Stretched in his gore
 There lieth one more!
 By the Pope's triple crown there are twenty
 and four!
 Twenty-four trunks, I ween, are there,
 But their heads and their limbs are no-body
 knows where!
 Ay, twenty-four corses, I rede, there be,
 Though one got away and ran up a tree!
 “Look nigher, look nigher,
 My trusty Squire!”
 “One is the corse of a bare-footed Friar!!”
 Out and spake Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
 “A boon, a boon, King Richard,” quoth he,
 “Now Heaven thee save,
 A boon I crave,
 A boon, Sir King, on my bended knee;
 A year and a day
 Have I been away,
 King Richard, from Ingoldsby Hall so free;
 Dame Alice, she sits there in lonely guise,
 And she makes her moan, and she sobs and
 she sighs,
 And tears like rain-drops fall from her eyes,
 And she darneth her hose, and she crieth
 ‘Alack!
 Oh! when will Sir Ingoldsby Bray come back?
 A boon, a boon, my Liege,” quoth he,
 “Fair Ingoldsby Hall I fain would see!”

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

"Rise up, rise up, Sir Ingoldsby Bray,"
King Richard said right graciously,

"Of all in my host

That I love the most,

I love none better, Sir Bray, than thee!

Rise up, rise up, thou hast thy boon;

But—mind you make haste, and come back
again soon!"

FYTTE II.

Pope Gregory sits in St. Peter's chair,

Pontiff proud, I ween, is he,

And a belted Knight,

In armour dight,

Is begging a boon on his bended knee,

With signs of grief and sounds of woe

Featly he kisseth his Holiness' toe.

"Now pardon, Holy Father, I crave,

O Holy Father, pardon and grace!

In my fury and rage

A little Foot-page

I have left, I fear me, in evil case:

A scroll of shame

From a faithless dame

Did that naughty Foot-page to a paramour bear:

I gave him a 'lick'

With a stick,

And a kick,

That sent him—I can't tell your Holiness
where!

Had he as many necks as hairs,

He had broken them all down those perilous
stairs!"

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

“ Rise up, rise up, Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
Rise up, rise up, I say to thee;
A soldier, I trow, thou art and true,
Of the Cross art thou;
Rise up, rise up, from thy bended knee!
Ill it beseems that a soldier true
Of holy Church should vainly sue:—
—Foot-pages, they are by no means rare,
A thriftless crew, I ween, be they,
Well mote we spare
A Page—or a pair,
For the matter of that—Sir Ingoldsby Bray.
—But stout and true
Soldiers, like you,
Grow scarcer and scarcer every day!
Be prayers for the dead
Duly read,
Let a mass be sung, and a *pater* be said;
So may your qualms of conscience cease,
And the little Foot-page shall rest in peace!”

“—Now pardon, Holy Father, I crave.
O Holy Father, pardon and grace!
Dame Alice, my wife,
The bane of my life,
I have left, I fear me, in evil case!
A scroll of shame in my rage I tore,
Which that caitiff Page to a paramour bore;
'T were bootless to tell how I storm'd and
swore;
Alack! alack! too surely I knew
The turn of each P, and the tail of each Q,
And away to Ingoldsby Hall I flew!

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Dame Alice I found,—
She sank on the ground,—
I twisted her neck till I twisted it round!
With jibe and jeer, and mock, and scoff,
I twisted it on—till I twisted it off!—
All the King's Doctors and all the King's
Men
Can't put fair Alice's head on agen!"—

"Well-a-day! well-a-day!
Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
Why, really I hardly know what to say:—
Foul sin, I trow, a fair Ladye to slay,
Because she's perhaps been a little too gay.—
—Monk must chant and Nun must pray:
For each mass they sing, and each pray'r
they say,
For a year, and a day,
Sir Ingoldsby Bray—
A fair rose-noble must duly pay!
So may his qualms of conscience cease,
And the soul of Dame Alice may rest in
peace!"

Now pardon, Holy Father, I crave,
O Holy Father, pardon and grace!
No power could save
That paramour knave;
I left him, I wot, in evil case!
There, 'midst the slain
Upon Ascalon plain,
Unburied, I trow, doth his body remain,

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

His legs lie here, and his arms lie there;
And his head lies—I can't tell your Holiness
Where.”

“Now out and alas! Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
Foul sin it were; thou doughty Knight,
To hack and to hew

A champion true

Of Holy Church in such pitiful plight!
Foul sin her warriors so to slay,
When they're scarcer and scarcer every
day!—

—A chauntry fair,

And of Monks a pair,
To pray for his soul for ever and aye,
Thou must duly endow, Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
And fourteen marks by the year must thou pay
For plenty of lights

To burn there o' nights—

None of your rascally ‘dips’—but sound,
Round, ten-penny moulds of four to the pound;
And a shirt of the roughest and coarsest hair
For a year and a day, Sir Ingoldsby, wear!
So may your qualms of conscience cease,
And the soul of the Soldier shall rest in
peace!”

“Now nay, Holy Father, now nay, now nay! A
Less penance may serve!” quoth Sir Ingoldsby
Bray.

“No champion free of the Cross was he;
No belted Baron of high degree;
No Knight nor Squire
Did there expire;

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

He was, I trow, but a bare-footed Friar!
 And the Abbot of Abingdon long may wait
 With his monks around him, and early and
 late
 May look from loop-hole, and turret, and gate,
 He hath lost his Prior—his Prior his pate!"

"Now Thunder and turf!" Pope Gregory
 said,
 And his hair raised his triple crown right off
 his head—

"Now Thunder and turf! and out and alas!
 A horrible thing has come to pass!
 What!—cut off the head of a reverend Prior,
 And say he was 'only (! ! !)' a bare-footed
 Friar!"

 'What Baron or Squire,
 Or Knight of the shire
 Is half so good as a holy Friar?"
 O, *turpissime!*
Vir nequissime!
Sceleratissime!—quissime!—issime!
 Never, I trow, have the *Servi servorum*
 Had before 'em

 Such a breach of decorum,
 Such a gross violation of *morum bonorum*,
 And won't have again *sæcula sæculorum!*—
 Come hither to me;
 My Cardinals three,
 My Bishops in *partibus*,
 Masters in *Artibus*,
 Hither to me, A.B. and D.D.
 Doctors and Proctors of every degree.

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Go fetch me a book!—go fetch me a bell
As big as a dustman's!—and a candle as
well—

I'll send him—*where* good manners won't
let me tell!"

—"Pardon, and grace!—now pardon and
grace!"

—Sir Ingoldsby Bray fell flat on his face—

"*Meâ culpâ!*—in sooth I'm in pitiful case.

Peccavi! peccavi!—I've done very wrong!

But my heart it is stout, and my arm it is
strong,

And I'll fight for holy Church all the day
long;

And the Ingoldsby lands are broad and fair,

And they're here, and they're there, and I
can't tell you where,

And Holy Church shall come in for her share!"

Pope Gregory paused, and he sat himself down,

And he somewhat relaxed his terrible frown,

And his Cardinals three they pick'd up his
crown.

"Now, if it be so that you own you've been
wrong,

And your heart is so stout, and your arm is so
strong,

And you really will fight like a trump all day
long;

If the Ingoldsby lands do lie here and there,

And Holy Church shall come in for her share,—

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Why, my Cardinals three,
You'll agree—
With me,
That it gives a new turn to the whole affair,
And I think that the Penitent need not despair!
—If it be so, as you seem to say,
Rise up, rise up, Sir Ingoldsby Bray!

An Abbey so fair Sir Bray shall found,
Whose innermost wall's encircling bound
Shall take in a couple of acres of ground;
And there in that Abbey all the year round,
A full choir of monks, and a full choir of nuns,
Shall live upon cabbage and hot-cross buns;
And Sir Ingoldsby Bray,
Without delay,
Shall hie him again
To Ascalon plain,
And gather the bones of the foully slain:
And shall place said bones, with all possible
care,
In an elegant shrine in his abbey so fair;
And plenty of lights
Shall be there o' nights;
None of your rascally '*dips*', but sound,
Best superfine wax-wicks, four to the pound;
And Monk and Nun
Shall pray, each one,
For the soul of the Prior of Abingdon!
And Sir Ingoldsby Bray, so bold and so brave,
Never shall wash himself, comb, or shave,
Nor adorn his body,
Nor drink gin-toddy,

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Nor indulge in a pipe,—
But shall dine upon tripe;
And blackberries gathered before they are ripe,
And for ever abhor, renounce; and abjure
Rum, hollands, and brandy, wine, punch, and
liqueur!”

(Sir Ingoldsby Bray

Here gave way

To a feeling which prompted a word profane,
But he swallow'd it down, by an effort, again,
And his Holiness luckily fancied his gulp a
Mere repetition of *O, mea culpa!*)

“Thrice three times upon Candlemas-day,
Between Vespers and Compline, Sir Ingoldsby
Bray

Shall run round the Abbey, as best he may,

Subjecting his back

To thump and to thwack,

Well and truly laid on by a bare-footed Friar,

With a stout cat-o'-ninetails of whipcord, and

wire;

And nor he, nor his heir

Shall take, use, or bear

Any more, from this day,

The surname of Bray,

As being dishonour'd; but all issue male he has

Shall, with himself, go henceforth by an *alias!*

So his qualms of conscience at length may

cease,

And Page, Dame, and Prior shall rest in

peace!”

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Sir Ingoldsby (now no longer Bray) :
Is off like a shot away and away,
Over the brine
To far Palestine,
To rummage and hunt over Ascalon plain
For the unburied bones of his victim slain.

“Look out, my Squire,
Look higher and nigher,
Look out for the corpse of a bare-footed Friar!
And pick up the arms, and the legs, of the
dead,
And pick up his body, and pick up his head!”

FYTTE III

Ingoldsby Abbey is fair to see,
It hath manors a dozen, and royalties three,
With right of free-warren (whatever that be);
Rich pastures in front, and green woods in the
rear,
All in full leaf at the right time of year;
About Christmas, or so, they fall into the sear,
And the prospect, of course, becomes rather
more drear:
But it's really delightful in spring-time,—and
near
The great gate Father Thames rolls sun-bright
and clear.
Cobham woods to the right,—on the opposite
shore
Laindon Hills in the distance, ten miles off or
more;

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Then you've Milton and Gravesend behind,—
and before

You can see almost all the way down to the
Nore.

So charming a spot

It's rarely one's lot

To see, and when seen it's as rarely forgot.

Yes, Ingoldsby Abbey is fair to see,

And its Monks and its Nuns are fifty and three,

And there they all stand each in their degree,

Drawn up in the front of their sacred abode,

Two by two, in their regular mode,

While a funeral comes down the Rochester
road.

Palmers twelve, from a foreign strand,

Cockle in hat, and staff in hand,

Come marching in pairs, a holy-band!

Little boys twelve, dressed all in white,

Each with his brazen censer bright,

And singing away with all their might,

Follow the Palmers—a goodly sight;

Next high in air

Twelve Yeomen bear

On their sturdy necks, with a good deal of
care,

A patent sarcophagus firmly rear'd,

Of Spanish mahogany (not veneer'd),

And behind walks a Knight with a very long
beard.

Close by his side

Is a Friar, supplied

With a stout cat-o'-ninetails of tough cow-
hide,

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

—While all sorts of queer men, boy and
 Bring up the rear—Men—
 at-arms, Nigger captives, and Bow-men, and
 Spear-men.

It boots not to tell
 What you'll guess very well,
 How some sang the *requiem*, some toll'd the
 bell;
 Suffice it to say,
 'Twas on Candlemas-day
 The procession I speak about reached the
Sacellum;
 And in lieu of a supper
 The Knight on his crupper
 Received the first taste of the Father's *flagel-
 lum*;
 That, as chronicles tell,
 He continued to dwell
 All the rest of his days in the Abbey he'd
 founded,
 By the pious of both sexes ever surrounded,
 And, partaking the fare of the Monks and the
 Nuns,
 Ate the cabbage alone, without touching the
 buns;
 —That year after year, having run round the
Quadrangle
 With his back, as enjoin'd him, exposed to the
 rod,
 Having not only kiss'd it, but bless'd it, and
 thank'd it, he
 Died, as all thought, in the odour of sanctity,

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

When,—strange to relate! and you'll hardly
believe

What I'm going to tell you,—next Candlemas
Eve

The Monks and the Nuns in the dead of the
night

Tumble, all of them, out of their beds in
affright,

Alarm'd by the bawls,
And the calls, and the squalls.

Of some one who seem'd running—all round
the walls!

Looking out, soon
By the light of the moon

There appears most distinctly to ev'ry one's
view,

And making, as seems to them, all this ado,
The form of a Knight with a beard like a Jew,

As black as if steep'd in that "Matchless!" of
Hunt's,

And so bushy, it would not disgrace Mr.
Muntz;

A bare-footed Friar stands behind him, and
shakes

A *flagellum*, whose lashes appear to be snakes;
While more terrible still, the astounded be-

holders

Perceive the said Friar has NO HEAD ON HIS
SHOULDERS,

But is holding his pate
In his left hand, out straight,

As if by a closer inspection to find
Where to get the best cut at his victim behind,

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

With the aid of a small, "bull's-eye lantern,"
—as placed
By our own New Police,—in a belt round his
waist.

All gaze with surprise,
Scarce believing their eyes,
When the Knight makes a start like a race-
horse, and flies
From his headless tormentor, repeating his
cries,—
In vain,—for the Friar to his skirts closely
sticks,
"Running after him",—so said the Abbot,
—"like Bricks!"

Thrice three times did the Phantom Knight
Course round the Abbey as best he might,
Be-thwack'd and be-smack'd by the headless
Sprite,
While his shrieks so piercing made all hearts
thrill,—
Then a whoop and a halloo,—and all was still!

Ingoldsby Abbey has passed away,
And at this time of day
One can hardly survey
Any traces or track, save a few ruins, grey
With age, and fast mouldering into decay,
Of the structure once built by Sir Ingoldsby
Bray;
But still there are many folks living who say
That on every Candlemas Eve, the Knight,
Accoutred and dight
In his armour bright,

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

With his thick black beard,—and the clerical
Sprite,
With his head in his hand, and his lantern
alight,
Run round the spot where the old Abbey stood,
And are seen in the neighbouring glebe-land
and wood;
More especially still, if it's stormy and windy,
You may hear them for miles kicking up their
wild shindy;
And that once in a gale
Of wind, sleet, and hail,
They frighten'd the horses, and upset the mail.

What 't is breaks the rest
Of these souls unblest
Would now be a thing rather hard to be guess'd,
Though some say the Squire, on his death-bed,
confess'd
That on Ascalon plain,
When the bones of the slain
Were collected that day, and pack'd up in a
chest,
Caulk'd and made water-tight,
By command of the Knight,
Though the legs and the arms they'd got all
pretty right,
And the body itself in a decentish plight,
Yet the Friar's *Pericranium* was nowhere in
sight;
So, to save themselves trouble, they'd pick'd
up instead,
And popp'd on the shoulders a Saracen's Head!

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Thus the Knight in the terms of his penance
had fail'd,
And the Pope's absolution, of course, nought
avail'd.

Now though this might be,
It don't seem to agree
With one thing which, I own, is a poser to
me,—

I mean, as the miracles wrought at the shrine
Containing the bones brought from far Palestine
Were so great and notorious, 't is hard to
combine

This *fact* with the reason these people assign,
Or suppose that the head of the murder'd
Divine

Could be aught but what Yankees would call
“*genu-ine*”.

'T is a very nice question—but be't as it may,
The Ghost of Sir Ingoldsby, (*ci-devant* Bray),
It is boldly affirm'd, by the folks great and small
About Milton, and Chalk, and around Cobham
Hall,

Still on Candlemas-day haunts the old ruin'd
wall,

And that many have seen him, and more heard
him squall:

So, I think, when the facts of the case you recall,
My inference, reader, you'll fairly forestall,

Viz. : that, spite of the hope

Held out by the Pope,

Sir Ingoldsby Bray was d—d after all!

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

MORAL

Foot-pages, and Servants of ev'ry degree,
In livery or out of it, listen to me!
See what comes of lying!—don't join in
a league

To humbug your master, or aid an in-
trigue!

Ladies! married and single, from this
understand

How foolish it is to send letters by
hand!

Don't stand for the sake of a penny,—but
when you

've a *billet* to send

To a lover or friend,

Put it into the post, and don't cheat the
revenue!

Reverend gentlemen!—you who are given
to roam,

Don't keep up a soft correspondence at
home!

But while you're abroad lead respectable
lives;

Love your neighbours, and welcome,—but
don't love their wives!

And, as bricklayers cry from the tiles and the
leads

When they're shovelling the snow off, "TAKE
CARE OF YOUR HEADS!"

THE INGOLDSBY PENANCE

Knights!—whose hearts are so stout, and
whose arms are so strong,
Learn,—to twist a wife's neck is decidedly
wrong!
If your servants offend you, or give themselves
airs,
Rebuke them—but mildly—don't kick them
down stairs!
To “Poor Richard's” homely old proverb
attend,
“If you want matters well managed, *Go!*—if
not, *Send!*”
A servant's too often a negligent elf;
—If it's business of consequence, *Do it YOUR-
SELF!*

The state of society seldom requires
People now to bring home with them unburied
Friars,
But they sometimes *do* bring home an inmate
for life;
Now—don't do that by proxy!—but choose
your own wife!
For think how annoying 't would be, when
you're wed,
To find in your bed,
On the pillow, instead
Of the sweet face you look for —A SARACEN'S
HEAD!

Nursery Reminiscences

[Kind, good-hearted, gouty Uncle John! how well I remember all the kindness and affection which my mischievous propensities so ill repaid—his bright blue coat and resplendent gilt buttons—his “frosty pow” *si bien poudré*—his little quill-like pigtail!—Of all my praiseworthy actions—they were “like angel visits, few and far between”—the never-failing and munificent rewarder; of my naughty deeds—they were multitudinous as the sands on the sea-shore—the ever-ready palliator; my intercessor, and sometimes even my defender against punishment, “staying harsh justice in its mid career!”—Poor Uncle John! he will ever rank among the dearest of my Nursery Reminiscences.]

I remember, I remember,

When I was a little Boy,
One fine morning in September
Uncle brought me home a toy.

I remember how he patted

Both my cheeks in kindest mood;
“Then,” said he, “you little Fat-head,
There’s a top because you’re good!”

NURSERY REMINISCENCES

Grandmamma—a shrewd observer—
I remember gazed upon
My new top, and said with fervour,
“Oh! how kind of Uncle John!”

While mamma, my form caressing,—
In her eye the tear-drop stood,
Read me this fine moral lesson,
“See what comes of being good!”

I remember, I remember,
On a wet and windy day,
One cold morning in December,
I stole out and went to play;

I remember Billy Hawkins
Came, and with his pewter squirt
Squibb'd my pantaloons and stockings
Till they were all over dirt!

To my mother for protection
I ran, quaking every limb:
—She exclaimed, with fond affection,
“Gracious Goodness! look at *him!*”—

Pa cried, when he saw my garment,
—’T was a newly-purchased dress—
“Oh! you nasty little *Warment*,
How came you in such a mess?”—

Then he caught me by the collar,
—Cruel only to be kind—

NURSERY REMINISCENCES

And to my exceeding dolour,
Gave me—several slaps behind.

Grandmamma, while yet I smarted,
As she saw my evil plight,
Said—'t was rather stony-hearted—
“Little rascal! *sarve* him right!”

I remember, I remember,
From that sad and solemn day,
Never more in dark December
Did I venture out to play.

And the moral which they taught, I
Well remember; thus they said—
“Little Boys, when they are naughty,
Must be whipped and sent to bed!”

And in my earliest infancy
I saw the world as it is now,
And in my heart I saw the world
As it is now, and as it will be.

Remembered, while yet I was young,
As the sun my eye light,
But not as the sun and the moon,
"Little world, I was the light."

I remember, I remember,
I am the sun and the moon,
I am the sun and the moon,
I am the sun and the moon.

And the world which they call
Will remember, they say,
"Little world, what they are
Must be whistled and not to tell."

And the world which they call
Will remember, they say,
"Little world, what they are
Must be whistled and not to tell."

And the world which they call
Will remember, they say,
"Little world, what they are
Must be whistled and not to tell."

A Row in an Omnibus (Box)

A LEGEND OF THE HAYMARKET

[Among a bundle of letters I find one from Sucklethumbkin, dated from London, and containing his version of perhaps the greatest theatrical Civil War since the celebrated "O. P. row". As the circumstances are now become matter of history, and poor Doldrum himself has been, alas! for some time the denizen of a far different "House", I have ventured to preserve it. Perhaps it may be unnecessary to add, that my Honourable friend has of late taken to Poetry, and goes without his cravat.]

Omnibus hoc vitium cantoribus.—HOR.

Dol-drum the Manager sits in his chair,
With a gloomy brow and dissatisfied air,
And he says, as he slaps his hand on his knee,
"I'll have nothing to do with Fiddle-de-dee!"

—"But Fiddle-de-dee sings clear and loud,
And his trills and his quavers astonish the
crowd:

A ROW IN AN OMNIBUS

Such a singer as he
You 'll nowhere see;
They 'll all be screaming for Fiddle-de-dee!"

—" Though Fiddle-de-dee sings loud and clear,
And his tones are sweet, yet his terms are dear!
The 'glove won't fit!'

The deuce a bit.
I shall give an engagement to Fal-de-ral-tit!"

The Prompter bow'd, and he went to his stall,
And the green-baize rose at the Prompter's call,
And Fal-de-ral-tit sang fol-de-rol-lol;

But, scarce had he done
When a "row" begun,
Such a noise was never heard under the sun.

" Fiddle-de-dee!—
—Where is he?

He's the *Artiste* whom we all want to see!—

Dol-drum!—Dol-drum!—
Bid the Manager come!

It's a scandalous thing to exact such a sum
For boxes and gallery, stalls and pit,
And then fob us off with a Fal-de-ral-tit!—

Deuce a bit!
We 'll never submit!
Vive Fiddle-de-dee! *à bas* Fal-de-ral-tit!"

Dol-drum the Manager rose from his chair,
With a gloomy brow and dissatisfied air;
But he smooth'd his brow,
As he well knew how,
And he walk'd on, and made a most elegant
bow,

A ROW IN AN OMNIBUS

And he paused, and he smiled, and advanced
to the lights,

In his opera-hat, and his opera-tights;

"Ladies and Gentlemen," then said he,

"Pray what may you please to want with me?"

"Fiddle-de-dee!—

Fiddle-de-dee!"

Folks of all sorts and of every degree,

Snob, and Snip, and haughty Grandee,

Duchesses, Countesses, fresh from their tea,

And Shopmen, who'd only come there for
a spree,

Halloo'd, and hooted, and roar'd with glee

"Fiddle-de-dee!—

None but He!—

Subscribe to his terms, whatever they be!—

Agree, agree, or you'll very soon see

In a brace of shakes we'll get up an O.P.!"

Dol-drum the Manager, full of care,

With a gloomy brow and dissatisfied air,

Looks distress,

And he bows his best,

And he puts his right hand on the side of his
breast,

And he says,—says he,

"We *can't* agree;

His terms are a vast deal too high for me.—

There's the rent, and the rates, and the sasses,
and taxes—

I can't afford Fiddle-de-dee what he *axes*.

If you'll only permit

Fal-de-ral-tit—"

A ROW IN AN OMNIBUS

The "Generous Public" cried "Deuce a bit!

Dol-drum!—Dol-drum!—

We'll none of us come.

It's 'No Go!'—it's 'Gammon!'—it's 'all a Hum':—

You're a miserly Jew!—

'Cock-a-doodle-do!'—

He *don't* ask too much, as you know—so you do—

It's a shame—it's a sin—it's really too bad—

You ought to be 'shamed of yourself—so you had!"

Dol-drum the Manager never before

In his lifetime had heard such a wild uproar: 2

Dol-drum the Manager turn'd to flee;

But he says—says he,

"Mort de ma vie!

I shall *nevere* engage vid dat Fiddle-de-dee!"

Then all the gentlefolks flew in a rage,

And they jump'd from the Omnibus on to the

Stage,

Lords, Squires, and Knights, they camed down

to the lights,

In their opera-hats, and their opera-tights.

Ma'am'selle Cherrytoes

Shook to her very toes,

She couldn't hop on, so hopp'd off on her

merry toes.

And the "evening concluded" with "Three times three!"

"Hip—hip!—hurrah! for Fiddle-de-dee!"

A ROW IN AN OMNIBUS

Dol-drum the Manager, full of care,
With a troubled brow and dissatisfied air,
Saddest of men,
Sat down, and then
Took from his table a Perryan pen,
And he wrote to the "News",
How MacFuze and Tregooze,
Lord Tomnoddy, Sir Carnaby Jenks of the Blues,
And the whole of their tail, and the separate
Of the Tags and the Rags, and the No-one-
knows-whos,
Had combined Monsieur Fal-de-ral-tit to abuse,
And make Dol-drum agree
With Fiddle-de-dee,
Who was not a bit better singer than he.
—Dol-drum declared "he never could see,
For the life of him, yet, why Fiddle-de-dee,
Who in B flat, or C,
Or whatever the key,
Could never at any time get below G,
Should expect a fee the same in degree
As the great Burlybumbo who sings double D."
Then silyly he added a little N.B.,
"If they'd have him in Paris he'd not come
to me!"

The Manager rings,
And the Prompter springs
To his side in a jiffy, and with him he brings
A set of those odd-looking envelope things,
(Where Britannia (who seems to be crucified,)
flings

A ROW IN AN OMNIBUS

To her right and her left, funny people with
wings,

Amongst Elephants, Quakers, and Catabaw
Kings;

And a taper and wax

And small Queen's heads in packs,

Which, when notes are too big, you're to stick
on their backs.

Dol-drum the Manager seal'd with care

The letter and copies he'd written so fair,

And sat himself down with a satisfied air;

Without delay

He sent them away,

In time to appear in "our columns" next day!

Dol-drum the Manager, full of care,

Walk'd on to the stage with an anxious air,

And peep'd through the curtain to see who
were there.

There was MacFuze,

And Lieutenant Tregooze,

And there was Sir Carnaby Jenks of the Blues,

And the Tags, and the Rags, and the No-one-
knows-whos;

And the green-baize rose at the Prompter's call,

And they all began to hoot, bellow, and bawl,

And cry "Cock-a-doodle", and scream, and
squall

"Dol-drum!—Dol-drum!—

Bid the Manager come!"

You'd have thought from the tones

Of their hisses and groans,

They were bent upon breaking his (Opera)
bones.

A ROW IN AN OMNIBUS

And Dol-drum comes, and he says—says he,
“Pray what may you please to want with me?”—

“Fiddle-de-dee!—

We'll have nobody give us *sol fa* but He!

For he's the *Artiste* whom we all want to see.”

—Manager Dol-drum says—says he—

(And he looks like an owl in “a hollow beech-tree”)

“Well, since I see

The thing must be,

I'll sign an agreement with Fiddle-de-dee!”

Then MacFuze, and Tregooze,

And Jenks of the Blues,

And the Tags, and the Rags, and the No-one-knows-whos,

Extremely delighted to hear such good news,

Desist from their shrill “Cock-a-doodle-does.”

“Vive Fiddle-de-dee!

Dol-drum and He!

They are jolly good fellows as ever need be!

And so's Burlybumbo, who sings double D!

And whenever they sing, why, we'll all come
and see!”

So, after all

This terrible squall,

Fiddle-de-dee

's at the top of the tree,

And Dol-drum and Fal-de-ral-tit sing small!

Now Fiddle-de-dee sings loud and clear

At I can't tell you how many thousands a-year,

And Fal-de-ral-tit is consider'd “Small Beer”;

A ROW IN AN OMNIBUS

And Ma'am'selle Cherrytoes
Sports her merry toës,
Dancing away to the fiddles and flutes;
In what the folks call a "Lithuanian" in boots.

So here's an end to my one, two, and thrée;
And bless the Queen—and long live She!
And grant that there never again may be
Such a halliballoo as we've happen'd to see
About nothing on earth but "Fiddle-de-dee!"

The Lay of St. Cuthbert; Or, The Devil's Dinner-Party

A LEGEND OF THE NORTH-COUNTREE

[We come now to the rummaging of Father John's stores. The extracts which I shall submit from them are of the same character as those formerly derived from the same source, and may be considered as theologico-historical, or Tracts for his times.

With respect to the first legend on this list, I have to remark, that, though the good Father is silent on the subject, there is every reason to believe that the "little curly-wigged" gentleman, who plays, though passively, so prominent a part in it, had Ingoldsby blood in his veins. This conjecture is supported by the fact of the arms of Scroope, impaling Ingoldsby, being found, as in the Bray case, in one of the windows, and by a very old marriage-settlement nearly, or quite, illegible.]

Nobilis quidam, cui nomen *Monsr. Lescrop, Chivaler*, cum invitasset convivas, et, hora convivii jam instante et apparatu facto, spe frustratus esset, excusantibus se convivis cur non compararent, prorupit iratus in hæc verba: "*Veniant igitur omnes dæmones, si nullus hominum mecum esse potest!*"

Quod cum fieret, et Dominus, et famuli, et ancillæ, a

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

domo properantes, forte obliti, infantem in cunis jacentem secum non auferunt. Dæmones incipiunt comessari et vociferari, prospicereque per fenestras formis ursorum, luporum, felium, et monstrare pocula vino repleta. *Ah*, inquit pater, *ubi infans meus?* Vix cum hæc dixisset, unus ex Dæmonibus ulnis suis infantem ad fenestram gestat, &c.

—*Chronicon de Bolton.*

It's in Bolton Hall, and the clock strikes One,
And the roast meat's brown and the boil'd
meat's done,

And the barbequ'd sucking-pig's crisp'd to a turn,
And the pancakes are fried, and beginning to
burn;

The fat stubble-geese
Swims in gravy and juice,
With the mustard and apple-sauce ready for
use;

Fish, flesh, and fowl, and all of the best,
Want nothing but eating—they're all ready
drest.

But where is the Host, and where is the Guest?

Pantler and serving-man, henchman and page,
Stand sniffing the duck-stuffing (onion and sage),
And the scullions and cooks,

With fidgetty looks,
Are grumbling and mutt'ring, and scowling as
black

As cooks always do when the dinner's put back;
For though the board's deckt, and the napery,
fair

As the unsunn'd snow-flake, is spread out with
care,

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

And the Dais is furnish'd with stool and with
chair,

And plate of *orfevrerie* costly and rare,

Apostle-spoons, salt-cellar, all are there,

And Mess John in his place,

With his rubicund face,

And his hands ready folded, prepared to say
Grace,

Yet where is the Host?—and his convives—
where?

The Scroope sits lonely in Bolton Hall,

And he watches the dial that hangs by the wall,

He watches the large hand, he watches the small,

And he fidgets and looks

As cross as the cooks,

And he utters—a word which we'll soften to
“Zooks!”

And he cries, “What on earth has become of
them all?—

What can delay

De Vaux and De Saye?

What makes Sir Gilbert de Umfraville stay?

What's gone with Poyntz, and Sir Reginald
Braye?

Why are Ralph Ufford and Marny away?

And De Nokes, and De Stiles, and Lord Mar-
maduke Grey?

And De Roe?

And De Doe?—

Poynings, and Vavasour—where be they?

Fitz-Walter, Fitz-Osbert, Fitz-Hugh, and Fitz-
John,

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

And the Mandevilles, *père et filz* (father and son)?
Their cards said 'Dinner precisely at One'!

There's nothing I hate, in

The world, like waiting!

It's a monstrous great bore, when a Gentleman
feels

A good appetite, thus to be kept from his meals!"

It's in Bolton Hall, and the clock strikes Two!
And the scullions and cooks are themselves in
"a stew",

And the kitchen-maids stand, and don't know
what to do,

For the rich plum-puddings are bursting their
bags,

And the mutton and turnips are boiling to rags,
And the fish is all spoil'd

And the butter's all oil'd,

And the soup's got cold in the silver tureen,

And there's nothing, in short, that is fit to be
seen!

While Sir Guy Le Scroope continues to fume,

And to fret by himself in the tapestried room,

And still fidgets, and looks

More cross than the cooks,

And repeats that bad word, which we've soften'd
to "Zooks!"

Two o'clock's come, and Two o'clock's gone,

And the large and the small hands move
steadily on,

Still nobody's there,

No De Roos, or De Clare,

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

To taste of the Scroope's most delicate fare,
Or to quaff off a health unto Bolton's Heir,
That nice little boy who sits there in his chair,
Some four years old, and a few months to spare,
With his laughing blue eyes, and his long curly
hair,

Now sucking his thumb, and now munching
his pear.

Again, Sir Guy the silence broke,
"It's hard upon Three!—it's just on the stroke!
Come, serve up the dinner!—A joke is a joke!"—
Little he deems that Stephen de Hoaques,
Who "his fun", as the Yankees say, every-
where "pokes",

And is always a great deal too fond of his jokes,
Has written a circular note to De Nokes,
And De Stiles, and De Roe, and the rest of the
folks,

One and all,
Great and small,
Who were asked to the Hall
To dine there and sup, and wind up with a ball,
And had told all the party a great bouncing
lie, he
Cook'd up, that "the *fête* was postponed *sine die*,
The dear little curly-wig'd heir of Le Scroope
Being taken alarmingly ill with the croup!"

When the clock struck Three,
And the Page on his knee,
Said "An't please you, Sir Guy Le Scroope,
On a servi!"

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

And the Knight found the banquet-hall empty
and clear,

With nobody near

To partake of his cheer,

He stamp'd, and he storm'd—then his language!—Oh dear!

'T was awful to see, and 't was awful to hear!

And he cried to the button-deck'd Page at his knee,

Who had told him so civilly "*On a servi,*"

"Ten thousand fiends seize them, wherever they be!

—The Devil take *them!* and the Devil take *thee!*

And the DEVIL MAY EAT UP THE DINNER
FOR ME!!"

In a terrible fume

He bounced out of the room,

He bounced out of the house—and page, foot-
man, and groom

Bounced after their master; for scarce had they
heard

Of this left-handed Grace the last finishing word,

Ere the horn at the gate of the Barbican tower

Was blown with a loud twenty-trumpeter power,

And in rush'd a troop

Of strange guests!—such a group

As had ne'er before darken'd the door of the
Scroope!

This looks like De Saye—yet—it is not De
Saye—

And this is—no, 'tis not—Sir Reginald Braye—

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

This has somewhat the favour of Marmaduke
Grey—

But stay!—*Where on earth did he get those long nails?*
Why, they're *claws!*—then Good Gracious!—
they've all of them *tails!*

That can't be De Vaux—why, his nose is a bill,
Or, I would say, a beak!—and he can't keep
it still!—

Is that Poynings?—Oh, Gemini!—look at his
feet!!

Why, they're absolute *hoofs!*—is it gout or his
corns

That have crumpled them up so?—by Jingo,
he's *horns!*

Run! run!—There's Fitz-Walter, Fitz-Hugh,
and Fitz-John,

And the Mandevilles, *père et filz* (father and son),
And Fitz-Osbert, and Ufford—*they've all got*
them on!

Then their great saucer eyes—

It's the Father of lies

And his Imps—run! run! run!—they're all
fiends in disguise,

Who've partly assumed, with more sombre
complexions,

The forms of Sir Guy Le Scroope's friends
and connexions,

And He—at the top there—that grim-looking
self—

Run! run!—that's the “muckle-horned
Clootie” himself!

And now what a din

Without and within!

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

For the court-yard is full of them.—How they
begin

To mop, and to mowe, and make faces, and grin!

Cock their tails up together,

Like cows in hot weather,

And butt at each other, all eating and drinking,

The viands and wine disappearing like winking.

And then such a lot

As together had got!

Master Cabbage, the steward, who'd made a
machine

To calculate with, and count noses,—I ween

The cleverest thing of the kind ever seen,—

Declared, when he'd made,

By the said machine's aid,

Up, what's now called, the "tottle" of those

he survey'd,

There were just—how he proved it I cannot
divine,—

Nine thousand, nine hundred, and ninety, and nine,

Exclusive of Him,

Who, giant in limb,

And black as the crow they denominate *Jim*,

With a tail like a bull, and a head like a bear,

Stands forth at the window,—and what holds

he there,

Which he hugs with such care,

And pokes out in the air,

And grasps as its limbs from each other he'd

tear?

Oh! grief and despair!

I vow and declare

It's Le Scroope's poor, dear, sweet, little,

curly-wig'd Heir!

THE SLAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

Whom the nurse had forgot, and left there in
his chair,
Alternately sucking his thumb and his pear!

What words can express
The dismay and distress
Of Sir Guy, when he found what a terrible
His cursing and banning had now got him
That words, which to use are a shame and a
Had thus on their speaker recoil'd, and his
malison
Placed in the hands of the Devil's own "pal"
his son!—

He sobb'd and he sigh'd,
And he scream'd, and he cried,
And behaved like a man that is mad, or in
liquor,—he

Tore his peak'd beard, and he dash'd off his
"Vicary",
Stamped on the jasey

As though he were crazy,
And staggering about just as if he were "hazy",
Exclaimed, "Fifty pounds!" (a large sum in
those times)

"To the person, whoever he may be, that
climbs

To that window above there, *en ogive*, and
painted,

And brings down my curly-wi'——" here Sir
Guy fainted!

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

With many a moan,
And many a groan,
What with tweaks of the nose, and some *eau de Cologne*,

He revived,—Reason once more remounted
her throne,

Or rather the instinct of Nature,—’t were
treason

To Her, in the Scroope’s case, perhaps, to say
Reason,—

But what saw he then?—Oh! my goodness!
a sight

Enough to have banished his reason outright!—

In that broad banquet hall

The fiends one and all,

Regardless of shriek, and of squeak, and of
squall,

From one to another were tossing that small,

Pretty, curly-wig’d boy, as if playing at ball:

Yet none of his friends or his vassals might
dare

To fly to the rescue, or rush up the stair,

And bring down in safety his curly-wig’d Heir!

Well a day! Well a day!

All he can say

Is but just so much trouble and time thrown
away;

Not a man can be tempted to join the *mêlée*,

E’en those words cabalistic, “I promise to pay
Fifty pounds on demand,” have, for once, lost
their sway,

And there the Knight stands,

Wringing his hands

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

In his agony—when on a sudden, one ray
Of hope darts through his midriff!—His Saint!

—Oh, it's funny,

And almost absurd,

That it never occur'd!—

“Ay! the Scroope's Patron Saint!—he's the
man for my money!

Saint—who is it?—really I'm sadly to blame,—

On my word I'm afraid,—I confess it with

shame,—

That I've almost forgot the good Gentleman's
name,—

Cut—let me see—Cutbeard?—no!—CUTHBERT!

—egad,

St. Cuthbert of Bolton!—I'm right—he's the
lad!

Oh! holy St. Cuthbert, if forbears of mine—

Of myself I say little,—have knelt at your shrine,

And have lashed their bare backs, and—no
matter—with twine,

Oh! list to the vow

Which I make to you now,

Only snatch my poor little boy out of the row!

Which that Imp's kicking up with his fiendish
bow-wow,

And his head like a bear, and his tail like a cow!

Bring him back here in safety!—perform but
this task,

And I'll give!—Oh!—I'll give you whatever
you ask!—

There is not a shrine

In the County shall shine

With a brilliancy half so resplendent as thine,

Or have so many candles, or look half so fine!—

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

Haste, holy St. Cuthbert, then,—hasten in
pity!”—

—Conceive his surprise

When a strange voice replies,

“It’s a bargain!—but, mind, sir, THE BEST
SPERMACEI!”—

Say, whose that voice?—whose that form by
his side,

That old, old grey man, with his beard long
and wide,

In his coarse Palmer’s weeds,

And his cockle and beads?—

And, how did he come?—did he walk?—did
he ride?

Oh! none could determine,—oh! none could
decide,—

The fact is, I don’t believe anyone tried,
For while ev’ry one stared, with a dignified
stride,

And without a word more,

He march’d on before,

Up a flight of stone steps, and so through the
front door,

To the banqueting-hall, that was on the first
floor,

While the fiendish assembly were making a rare
Little shuttlecock there of the curly-wig’d

Heir.—

—I wish, gentle Reader, that you could have
seen

The pause that ensued when he stepp’d in
between,

With his resolute air, and his dignified mien,

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

And said, in a tone most decided, though mild,
“Come!—I’ll trouble you just to hand over
that child!”

The Demoniac crowd

In an instant seem’d cowed;
Not one of the crew volunteer’d a reply,
All shrunk from the glance of that keen-flash-
ing eye,
Save one horrid Humgruffin, who seem’d by his
talk,
And the airs he assumed, to be Cock of the
walk,
He quailed not before it, but saucily met it,
And as saucily said, “Don’t you wish you may
get it?”

My goodness!—the look that the old Palmer
gave!

And his frown!—’t was quite dreadful to wit-
ness—“Why, slave!

You rascal!” quoth he,

“This language to ME!!

—At once, Mr. Nicholas! down on your knee,
And hand me that curly-wig’d boy!—I com-
mand it—

Come!—none of your nonsense!—you know
I won’t stand it.”

Old Nicholas trembled,—he shook in his shoes,
And seem’d half inclined, but afraid, to refuse.

“Well, Cuthbert,” said he,

“If so it must be,

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

—For you've had your own way from the first
time I knew ye;—

Take your curly-wig'd brat, and much good
may he do ye!

But I'll have in exchange—"—here his eye
flash'd with rage—

"That chap with the buttons—he *gave me* the
Page!"

"Come, come," the Saint answer'd, "you very
well know

The young man's no more his than your own
to bestow—

Touch one button of his if you dare, Nick—
no! no!

Cut your stick, sir—come, mizzle!—be off with
you!—go!"—

The Devil grew hot—

"If I do I'll be shot!

An you come to that, Cuthbert, I'll tell you
what's what;

He has *asked* us to *dine here*, and go we will not!

Why, you Skinfint,—at least

You may leave us the feast!

Here we've come all that way from our brim-
stone abode,

Ten million good leagues, Sir, as ever you strode,
And the deuce of a luncheon we've had on the
road—

—'Go!' — 'Mizzle!' indeed — Mr. Saint,
who are you,

I should like to know?—'Go!'—I'll be hanged
if I do!

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

He invited us all—we've a right here—it's
known
That a Baron may do what he likes with
his own—
Here, Asmodeus—a slice of that beef;—now
the mustard!—
What have you got?—oh, apple-pie—try it
with custard!”

The Saint made a pause,
As uncertain, because
He knew Nick is pretty well “up” in the
laws,
And they *might* be on *his* side—and then, he'd
such claws!
On the whole, it was better, he thought, to
retire
With the curly-wig'd boy he'd pick'd out of
the fire,
And give up the victuals—to retrace his path,
And to compromise—(spite of the Member for
Bath).
So to Old Nick's appeal,
As he turn'd on his heel,
He replied, “Well, I'll leave you the mutton
and veal,
And the soup *à la Reine*, and the sauce *Bechamel*.
As The Scroope *did* invite you to dinner, I feel
I can't well turn you out—'t would be hardly
genteel—
But be moderate, pray,—and remember thus
much,
Since you're treated as Gentlemen, show your-
selves such,

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

And don't make it late,
But mind and go straight
Home to bed when you've finished—and
don't steal the plate!
Nor wrench off the knocker, or bell from the
gate.
Walk away, like respectable Devils, in peace,
And don't 'lark' with the watch, or annoy the
police!"

Having thus said his say,
That Palmer grey
Took up little Le Scroope, and walk'd coolly
away,
While the Demons all set up a "Hip! hip!
hurray!"
Then fell, tooth and claw, on the victuals, as
they
Had been guests at Guildhall upon Lord
Mayor's day,
All scrambling and scuffling for what was
before 'em,
No care for precedence or common decorum.

Few ate more hearty
Than Madame Astarte,
And Hecate,—considered the Belles of the
party.
Between them was seated Leviathan, eager
To "do the polite", and take wine with Bel-
phegor;
Here was Morbleu (a French devil), supping
soup-meagre,
And there, munching leeks, Davy Jones of
Tredegar

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

(A Welsh one); who'd left the domains of Ap
Morgan,
To "follow the sea",—and next him Demogorgon,—
Then Pan with his pipes, and Fauns grinding
the organ
To Mammon and Belial; and halt a score
dancers,

Who'd joined with Medusa to get up "the
Lancers";

—Here's Lucifer milking blind drunk with
Scotch ale,

While Beëlzebub's tying huge knots in his
tail.

There's Setebos, storming because Mephistopheles

Gave him the lie,

Said he'd "blacken his eye";

And dash'd in his face a whole cup of hot
coffee-lees;—

Ramping, and roaring,

Hiccoughing, snoring,

Never was seen such a riot before in

A gentleman's house, or such profligate revel-
ling

At any *soirée*—where they don't let the Devil in.

Hark!—as sure as fate

The clock's striking Eight!

(An hour which our ancestors called "getting
late",)

When Nick, who by this time was rather elate,
Rose up and addressed them.

"'T is full time," he said,

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

“For all elderly Devils to be in their bed;
For my own part I mean to be jogging, be-
cause
I don’t find myself now quite so young as
I was;
But, Gentlemen, ere I depart from my post,
I must call on you all for one bumper—the
toast
Which I have to propose is,—OUR EXCELLENT
Host!
—Many thanks for his kind hospitality—may
We also be able
To see at *our* table
Himself, and enjoy, in a family way,
His good company *down stairs* at no distant
day!
You’d,
I’m sure, think me rude
If I did not include
In the toast my young friend there, the curly-
wig’d Heir.
He’s in very good hands, for you’re all well
aware
That St. Cuthbert has taken him under his
care;
Though I must not say ‘bless’,—
—Why, you’ll easily guess,—
May our curly-wig’d Friend’s shadow never
be less!”
Nick took off his heel-taps—bow’d—smiled—
with an air
Most graciously grim,—and vacated the chair,—
Of course the *élite*
Rose at once on their feet,

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

And followed their leader, and beat a retreat;
When a sky-larking Imp took the President's
seat,

And, requesting that each would replenish his
cup,

Said, "Where we have dined, my boys, there
let us sup!"—

—It was three in the morning before they
broke up!!!

I scarcely need say

Sir Guy didn't delay

To fulfil his vow made to St. Cuthbert, or pay
For the candles he'd promised, or make light

as day

The shrine he assured him he'd render so gay.

In fact, when the votaries came there to pray,
All said there was nought to compare with it

—nay,

For fear that the Abbey

Might think he was shabby,

Four Brethren thenceforward, two cleric, two

He ordained should take charge of a new-

founded chantry,

With six marcs apiece, and some claims on the
pantry;

In short, the whole County

Declared, through his bounty,

The Abbey of Bolton exhibited fresh scenes
From any displayed since Sir William de

Meschines,

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

And Cecily Roumeli came to this nation
With William the Norman, and laid its
foundation.

For the rest, it is said,
And I know I have read
In some Chronicle—whose, has gone out of
my head—
That, what with these candles, and other
expenses,
Which no man would go to if quite in his
senses,

He reduced, and brought low
His property so,
That, at last, he'd not much of it left to bestow;
And that, many years after that terrible feast,
Sir Guy, in the Abbey, was living a Priest;
And there, in one thousand and—something,
—deceased.

(It's supposed by this trick
He bamboozled Old Nick,
And slipped through his fingers remarkably
“slick.”)

While, as to young Curly-wig,—dear little Soul,
Would you know more of him, you must look
at “The Roll”;

Which records the dispute,
And the subsequent suit,
Commenced in “Thirteen sev'nty-five,”—
which took root

In Le Grosvenor's assuming the arms Le
Scroope swore
That none but *his* ancestors, ever before,
In foray, joust, battle, or tournament wore,

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

To wit, "On a Prussian-blue Field, a Bend
Or;" —

While the Grosvenor averred that *his* ancestor
bore

The same, and Scroope lied like a—somebody
tore

Off the simile,—so I can tell you no more,
Till some A double S shall the fragment
restore.

MORAL

This Legend sound maxims exemplifies—
e.g.—

1mo. Should any thing tease you,
Annoy, or displease you,

Remember what Lilly says, "*Animum rege!*"

And as for that shocking bad habit of
swearing,—

In all good society voted past bearing,—

Eschew it! and leave it to dustmen and
mobs,

Nor commit yourself much beyond
"Zooks!" or "Odsbobs!"

2do. When asked out to dine by a Person
of Quality,

Mind, and observe the most strict punctu-
ality!

For should you come late,

And make dinner wait,

And the victuals get cold, you'll incur,
sure as fate,

The Master's displeasure, the Mistress's
hate:

THE LAY OF ST. CUTHBERT

And—though both may, perhaps, be too
well-bred to swear,—

They'll heartily wish you—I need not say
Where.

3tio. Look well to your Maid-servants!—say
you expect them

To see to the children, and not to neglect
them!

And if you're a widower, just throw a
cursory

Glance in, at times, when you go near
the Nursery.

—Perhaps it's as well to keep children
from plums,

And from pears in the season,—and suck-
ing their thumbs!

4to. To sum up the whole with a “Saw” of
much use,

Be *just*, and be *generous*,—don't be pro-
fuse!—

Pay the debts that you owe,—keep your
word to your friends,

But—DON'T SET YOUR CANDLES ALIGHT AT
BOTH ENDS!!—

For of this be assured, if you “go it” too
fast,

You'll be “dish'd” like Sir Guy,

And like him, perhaps, die

A poor, old, half-starved Country Parson

at last!

The Lay of St. Aloys

A LEGEND OF BLOIS

[For the Legend that follows Father John has, it will be seen, the grave authority of a Romish Prelate. The good Father, who, as I have before had occasion to remark, received his education at Douai, spent several years, in the earlier part of his life, upon the Continent. I have no doubt but that during this period he visited Blois, and there, in all probability, picked up, in the very scene of its locality, the history which he has thus recorded.]

S. Heloſus in hâc urbe fuit episcopus, qui, defunctus, sepulturus est a fidelibus. Nocte autem sequenti, veniens quidam paganus lapidem, qui sarcophagum tegebat, revolvit, erectumque contra se corpus Sancti spoliare, conatur. At ille, lacertis constrictum, ad se hominem fortiter amplexatur, et usque mane, populis spectantibus, tanquam constipatum loris, ita miserum brachiis detinebat. Judex loci sepulchri violatorem jubet abstrahi, et legali pœnæ sententiâ condemnari; sed non laxabatur a Sancto. Tunc intelligens voluntatem defuncti, Judex, factâ de vitâ promissione, absolvit, deinde laxatur, et sic incolumis red-ditur: non vero fur demissus quin se vitam monasteri-cam amplexurum spopondisset.

—*Greg: Turnoens: de Gloriâ Confessorum.*

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

SAINT ALOYS

Was the Bishop of Blois,
And a pitiful man was he,
He grieved and he pined
For the woes of mankind,
And of brutes in their degree,—
He would rescue the rat
From the claws of the cat,
And set the poor captive free;
Though his cassock was swarm-
ing

With all sorts of vermin,
He 'd not take the life of a flea!—
Kind, tender, forgiving
To all things living,
From injury still he 'd endeavour to screen
em,
Fish, flesh, or fowl,—no difference between
em—

NIHIL PUTAVIT A SE ALIENUM.

The Bishop of Blois was a holy
man,—

A holy man was he!
For Holy Church
He 'd seek and he 'd search
As a Bishop in his degree.
From foe and from friend
He 'd "rap and he 'd rend",
To augment her treasure.
Nought would he give, and little
he 'd lend,
That Holy Church might have
more to spend:—

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

“Count Stephen” (of Blois) “was a worthy
Peer,

His breeches cost him but a crown,
He held them sixpence all too dear,

And so he call’d the Tailor lown.”—
Had it been the Bishop instead of the Count,
And he’d overcharged him to half the amount.

He had knock’d that Tailor down!—
Not for himself!—

He despised the pelf;
He dress’d in sackcloth, he dined off delf;
And, when it was cold, in lieu of a *surtout*,
The good man would wrap himself up in his
virtue.

Alack! that a man so holy as he,
So frank and free in his degree,
And so good and so kind, should mortal be!

Yet so it is—for loud and clear
From St. Nicholas’ tower, on the listening
ear,

With solemn s’vell,
The deep-toned bell

Flings to the gale a funeral knell;

And hark!—at its sound, ;
As a cunning old hound,

When he opens, at once causes all the young
whelps

Of the cry to put in their less dignified yelps,
So—the little bells all,

No matter how small,

From the steeples both inside and outside the
wall,

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

With bell-metal throat
Respond to the note,
And join the lament that a prelate so pious
is
Forced thus to leave his disconsolate diocese,
Or, as Blois' Lord May'r
Is heard to declare,
"Should leave this here world for to go to that
there."

And see, the portals opening wide,
From the Abbey flows the living tide;
Forth from the doors
The torrent pours;
Acolytes, Monks, and Friars in scores,
This with his chasuble, that with his rosary,
This from his incense-pot turning his nose
awry,
Holy Father, and Holy Mother;
Holy Sister, and Holy Brother,
Holy Son, and Holy Daughter;
Holy Wafer, and Holy Water;
Every one drest
Like a guest in his best,
In the smartest of clothes they're permitted to
wear,
Serge, sackcloth, and shirts of the same sort of
hair
As now we make use of to stuff an arm-chair,
Or weave into gloves at three shillings a pair,
And employ for shampooing in cases rheumatic,
—a
Special specific, I'm told, for Sciatica.

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

Through groined arch, and by cloister'd stone,
With mosses and ivy long o'ergrown,

Slowly the throng

Come passing along,
With many a chaunt and solemn song,
Adapted for holidays, high-days, and Sundays,—

Dies iræ, and *De profundis*,

Miserere, and *Domine dirige nos*,—
Such as, I hear, to a very slow tune are all

Commonly chaunted by Monks at a funeral,

To secure the defunct's repose,

And to give a broad hint to Old Nick, should

The news

Of a prelate's decease bring him there on a
cruise,

That he'd better be minding his P's and his
Q's,

And not come too near,—since they can, if they
choose,

Make him shake in his hoofs—as he does not
wear shoes.

Still on they go,

A goodly show,

With footsteps sure, though certainly slow,

Two by two in a very long row;

With feathers, and Mutes

In mourning suits,

Undertaker's men walking in hat-bands and
boots,—

Then comes the Crosier, all jewels and gold,

Borne by a lad about eighteen years old;

Next, on a black velvet cushion, the Mitre,

Borne by a younger boy, 'cause it is lighter.

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

Eight Franciscans, sturdy and strong,
Bear, in the midst, the good Bishop along;
Eight Franciscans, stout and tall,
Walk at the corners, and hold up the pall;
Eight more hold a canopy high over all,
With eight Trumpeters tooting the Dead
March in Saul.—
Behind, as Chief Mourner, the Lord Abbot
Goes; his
Monks coming after him, all with posies,
And white pocket-handkerchiefs up at their
Noses,
Which they blow whenever his Lordship blows
His—
And oh! 't is a comely sight to see
How Lords and Ladies, of high degree,
Vail, as they pass, upon bended knee,
While quite as polite are the Squires and the
Knights,
In their helmets, and hauberks, and cast-iron
tights.

Ay, 't is a comely sight to behold,
As the company march
Through the rounded arch
Of that Cathedral old!—
Singers behind 'em, and singers before 'em,
All of them ranging in due decorum,
Around the inside of the *Sanctum Sanctorum*,
While, brilliant and bright,
An unwonted light
(I forgot to premise this was all done at
night)

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

The links, and the torches, and flambeaux
shed

On the sculptured forms of the Mighty
Dead,

That rest below, mostly buried in lead,

And above, recumbent in grim repose,

With their mailed hose,

And their dogs at their toes,

And little boys kneeling beneath them in
rows,

Their hands join'd in pray'r, all in very long
clothes,

With inscriptions on brass, begging each who
survives,

As they some of them seem to have led so-so
lives,

To *Praie for the Sowles* of themselves and their
wives.

—The effect of the music, too, really was fine,
When they let the good prelate down into his
shrine,

And by old and young

The "*Requiem*" was sung ;

Not vernacular French, but a classical tongue,

That is—Latin—I don't think they meddled
with Greek—

In short, the whole thing produced—so to
speak—

What in Blois they would call a *Coup d'œil*
magnifique !

Yet, surely, when the level ray

Of some mild eve's descending sun

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

Lights on the village pastor, grey
In years ere ours had well begun—

As there—in simplest vestment clad,
He speaks, beneath the churchyard tree,
In solemn tones,—but yet not sad,—
Of what Man is—what Man shall be!

And clustering round the grave, half hid
By that same quiet churchyard yew,
The rustic mourners bend, to bid
The dust they loved a last adieu—

—That ray, methinks, that rests so sheen
Upon each briar-bound hillock green,
So calm, so tranquil, so serene,
Gives to the eye a fairer scene,—
Speaks to the heart with holier breath
Than all this pageantry of Death.—

But *Chacun à son gout*—this is talking at random—

We all know "*De gustibus non disputandum!*"
So canter back, Muse, to the scene of your
story,

The Cathedral of Blois—
Where the Sainted Aloys
Is by this time, you'll find, "left alone in his
glory",

"In the dead of the night", though with labour
opprest,
Some "mortals" disdain "the calm blessings
of rest",

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

Your cracksman, for instance, thinks night-time
the best

To break open a door, or the lid of a chest;

And the gipsy who close round your premises
prowls,

To ransack your hen-roost, and steal all your
fowls,

Always sneaks out at night with the bats and
the owls,

—So do Witches and Warlocks, Ghosts, Gob-
lins, and Gouls,

To say nothing at all of those troublesome
“Swell”

Who come from the playhouses, “flash kens”,
and “hells”,

To pull off people’s knockers, and ring people’s
bells.

Well—’t is now the hour

Ill things have power!

And all who, in Blois, entertain honest views,
Have long been in bed, and enjoying a snooze,—

Nought is waking

Save Mischief and “Faking”,

And a few who are sitting up brewing or baking,
When an ill-looking Infidel, sallow of hue,

Who stands in his slippers some six feet two

(A rather remarkable height for a Jew),

Creeps cautiously out of the churchwarden’s
pew,

Into which, during service, he’d managed to
slide himself—

While all were intent on the anthem, and hide
himself.

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

From his lurking place,
With stealthy pace,
Through the "long-drawn aisle" he begins to
crawl,
As you see a cat walk on the top of a wall,
When it's stuck full of glass, and she thinks
she shall fall.

—He proceeds to feel
For his flint and his steel,
(An invention, on which we've improved a
great deal

Of late years—the substitute best to rely on
's what Jones of the Strand calls his *Pyro-*
geneion.)

He strikes with dispatch!—his
Tinder catches!—
Now where is his candle?—and where are his
matches?—

'T is done!—they are found!—

He stands up, and looks round.
By the light of a "dip" of sixteen to the
pound!

—What is it now that makes his nerves to
quiver?—

His hand to shake—and his limbs to shiver?—
Fear?—Pooh!—it is only a touch of the
liver—

All is silent—all is still—

It's "gammon"—it's "stuff!"—he may do
what he will!

Carefully now he approaches the shrine,
In which, as I've mentioned before, about nine,
They had placed in such state the lamented
Divine!

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

But not to worship—No!—No such thing!—
His aim is—TO “PRIG” THE PASTORAL RING!!

Fancy his fright,
When, with all his might
Having forced up the lid, which they'd not
fastened quite,
Of the marble sarcophagus—“All in white”
The dead Bishop started up, bolt upright
On his hinder end,—and grasped him fast
tight,
That the clutch of a kite,
Or a bull-dog's bite
When he's most provoked and in bitterest
spite,
May well be conceived in comparison slight,
And having thus “tackled” him—blew out his
light!!

Oh, dear! Oh, dear!
The fright and the fear!—
No one to hear!—nobody near!
In the dead of the night!—at a bad time of
year!—
A defunct Bishop squatting upright on his
bier,
And shouting so loud, that the drum of his
ear
He thought would have split as these awful
words met it—
“AH, HA! MY GOOD FRIEND!—DON'T YOU WISH
YOU MAY GET IT?”—
Oh, dear! Oh, dear!
'Twas a night of fear!

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

—I should just like to know, if the boldest
man here,
In his situation would not have felt queer?

The wretched man bawls,
And he yells, and he squalls,
But there's nothing responds to his shrieks save
the walls,
And the desk, and the pulpit, the pews, and
the stalls.

Held firmly at bay,
Kick and plunge as he may,
His struggles are fruitless—he can't get away,
He really can't tell what to do or to say,
And being a Pagan, don't know how to pray;
Till through the east window, a few streaks of
grey
Announce the approach of the dawn of the
day!

Oh, a welcome sight
Is the rosy light
Which lovelily heralds a morning bright,
Above all to a wretch kept in durance all night
By a horrid dead gentleman holding him
tight,—

Of all sorts of gins that a trespasser can trap,
The most disagreeable kind of a man trap!

—Oh! welcome that bell's
Matin chime, which tells
To one caught in this worst of all possible
snares,

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

That the hour is arrived to begin Morning
Prayers,
And the Monks and the Friars are coming down
stairs !

Conceive the surprise
Of the Choir—how their eyes
Are distended to twice their original size,—
How some begin bless,—some anathematize,—
And all look on the thief as old Nick in dis-
guise.

While the mystified Abbot cries, “Well !—I
declare !—
—This is really a very mysterious affair !—
Bid the bandy-legg’d Sexton go run for the
May’r !”

The May’r and his *suite*
Are soon on their feet,—
(His worship kept house in the very same
street,—)

At once he awakes,
“His compliments” makes,
“He’ll be up at the church in a couple of
shakes !”

Meanwhile the whole Convent is pulling and
hauling,
And bawling and squalling,
And terribly mauling

The thief whose endeavour to follow his call-
ing
Had thus brought him into a grasp so enthrall-
ing.—

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

Now high, now low,
They drag "to and fro",—
Now this way, now that way they twist him—
but—No!—

The glazed eye of St. Aloys distinctly says
"Poh!

You may pull as you please, I shall *not* let him
go!"

Nay, more;—when his Worship at length
came to say

He was perfectly ready to take him away,

And fat him to grace the next *Auto da fé*,

Still closer he prest

The poor wretch to his breast,

While a voice—though his jaws still together
were jamm'd—

Was heard from his chest, "If you do, I'll
——" here slamm'd

The great door of the church,—with so awful
a sound

That the close of the good Bishop's sentence
was drown'd!

Out spake *Frère Jehan*,

A pitiful man,

Oh! a pitiful man was he!

And he wept and he pined

For the sins of mankind,

As a Friar in his degree.

"Remember, good gentlefolks," so he began,

"Dear Aloys was always a pitiful man!—

That voice from his chest

Has clearly exprest

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

He has pardoned the culprit—and, as for the
rest, ~~and not to be~~ ^{rest,}
Before you shall burn him—he'll see you all
blest !”

The Monks, and the Abbot, the Sexton, and
Clerk

Were exceedingly struck with the Friar's
remark,

And the Judge, who himself was by no means
a shark

Of a Lawyer, and who did not do things in
the dark,

But still leaned (having once been himself a
gay spark,)

To the merciful side,—like the late Alan
Park,—

Agreed that, indeed,

The best way to succeed,

And by which this poor caitiff alone could be
freed,

Would be to absolve him, and grant a free
pardon,

On a certain condition, and that not a hard
one,

Viz.—“That he, the said Infidel, straightway
should ope

His mind to conviction, and worship the Pope,
And ‘ev’ry man Jack’ in an amice or cope;

And that, to do so,

He should forthwith go

To Rome, and salute there his Holiness’
toe;—

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

And never again
Read Voltaire or Tom Paine,
Or Percy Bysshe Shelley or Lord Byron's
Cain;—

His pilgrimage o'er, take St. Francis's habit;—
If anything lay about, never to 'nab' it;
Or, at worst, if he *should* light on articles gone
astray,
To be sure and deposit them safe in the
Monast'ry!"

The oath he took—
As he kiss'd the book,
Nave, transept, and aisle with a thunder-clap
shook!

The Bishop sank down with a satisfied look,
And the Thief, releas'd
By the Saint deceas'd,
Fell into the arms of a neighbouring Priest!

It skills not now
To tell you how
The transmogrified Pagan perform'd his vow;
How he quitted his home,
Travell'd to Rome,
And went to St. Peter's and look'd at the
Dome,
And obtain'd from the Pope an assurance of
bliss,
And kiss'd—whatever he gave him to kiss—
Toe, relic, embroidery, nought came amiss;
And how Pope Urban
Had the man's turban

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

Hung up in the Sistine chapel, by way
Of a relic—and how it hangs there to this
day.—

Suffice it to tell,
Which will do quite as well,
That the whole of the Convent the miracle saw,
And the Abbot's report was sufficient to draw
Ev'ry *bon Catholique* in *la belle France* to Blois,
Among others, the Monarch himself, François,
The Archbishop of Rheims, and his "Pious
Jackdaw",

And there was not a man in Church, Chapel,
or Meeting-house,
Still less in *Cabaret*, Hotel, or Eating-house,
But made an oration,

And said, "In the nation
If ever a man deserved canonization,
It was the kind, pitiful, pious Aloys."—

So the Pope says—says he,
"Then a Saint he shall be!"—
So he made him a Saint,—and remitted the fee.

What became of the Pagan I really can't say;
But I think I've been told,
When he'd enter'd their fold,
And was now a Franciscan some twenty days
old,

He got up one fine morning before break of
day,
Put the *Pyx* in his pocket—and then ran away.

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

MORAL

I think we may coax out a moral or two
From the facts which have lately come under
our view.

First—Don't meddle with Saints!—for you'll
find if you do

They're what Scotch people call "kittle cattle
to shoe!"

And when once they have managed to take you
in tow,

It's a deuced hard matter to make them let go!

Now to you, wicked Pagans!—who wander
about,

Up and down Regent Street every night, "on
the scout",—

Recollect the Police keep a sharpish look-out,
And if once you're suspected, your skirts they
will stick to

Till they catch you at last *in flagrante delicto!*—

Don't the inference draw

That because he of Blois
Suffer'd *one* to bilk "Old father Antic the
Law",

That *our* May'rs and *our* Aldermen—and
we've a City full—

Show themselves, at *our* Guildhall, quite so
pitiful!

Lastly, as to the Pagan who play'd such a
trick,

First assuming the tonsure, then cutting his
stick,

THE LAY OF ST. ALOYS

There is but one thing which occurs to me—
that

Is,—Don't give too much credit to people who
“rat!”

—Never forget

Early habit's a net

Which entangles us all, more or less, in its
mesh;

And “What's bred in the bone won't come
out of the flesh!”

We must all be aware Nature's prone to rebel,
as

Old Juvenal tells us, *Naturam expellas,*

Tamen usque recurret!

There's no use making Her rat!

So that all that I have on this head to advance

Is,—whatever they think of these matters in
France,

There's a proverb, the truth of which each one
allows here,

“YOU NEVER CAN MAKE A SILK PURSE OF A SOW'S
EAR!”

THE LAY OF ST. ALFRED

There is but one thing which I care to do—
That
Is—I don't give too much credit to people who
"tell"
—I never forget
Early had I a son
Which engages us all, more or less, in its
"story";
And "What's a boy in his home won't come
out of his shell!"

We must all be aware of a man's power to rebel,
Is
And Alfred tells me, "What's a boy's example,
I never forget."
There's no one making him tell
So that all that I have on his hand to advance
Is—wherever they think of these matters in
"history."
That's a goodly, the half of which each one
"shall" have,
"You shall" can make a wide view of a story
"tell!"

The Lay of the Old Woman Clothed in Grey

A LEGEND OF DOVER

[In the succeeding Legend we come nearer home.—Father Ingoldsby is particular in describing its locality, situate some eight miles from the Hall—less, if you take the bridle-road by the Church-yard, and so along the valley by Mr. Fector's Abbey.—In the enumeration of the various attempts to appropriate the treasure (drawn from a later source), is omitted one, said to have been undertaken by the worthy ecclesiastic himself, who, as Mrs. Botherby insinuates, is reported to have started for Dover, one fine morning, duly furnished with all the means and appliances of Exorcism. I cannot learn, however, that the family was ever enriched by his expedition.]

ONCE there lived, as I've heard people say,
An "Old Woman clothed in grey",

So furrow'd with care,

So haggard her air,

In her eye such a wild supernatural stare,

That all who espied her

Immediately shied her,

And strove to get out of her way.

THE LAY OF THE OLD

This fearsome Old Woman was taken ill :
—She sent for the Doctor—he sent her a pill,
And by way of a trial,
A two-shilling phial
Of green-looking fluid, like lava diluted,
To which I've professed an abhorrence most
rooted,
One of those draughts they so commonly send
us,
Labell'd "*Haustus catharticus, mane sumendus*";—

She made a wry face,
And, without saying Grace,
Toss'd it off like a dram—it improv'd not her
case.
—The Leech came again ;
He now open'd a vein,
Still the little Old Woman continued in pain.
So her "Medical Man", although loth to dis-
tress her,
Conceived it high time that her Father Con-
fessor
Should be sent for to shrive, and assoilzie, and
bless her,
That she might not slip out of these trouble-
some scenes
"Unaneal'd and Unhouseled,"—whatever that
means.

Growing afraid,
He calls to his aid
A bandy-legg'd neighbour, a "*Tailor by trade*",
Tells him his fears,
Bids him lay by his shears,

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

His thimble, his goose, and his needle, and his
With all possible speed to the Convent hard by,
Requests him to say

That he begs they'll all pray,
Viz.: The whole pious brotherhood, Cleric
and Lay,
For the soul of an Old Woman clothed in
grey,

Who was just at that time in a very bad way,
And he really believed couldn't last out the
day;—

And to state his desire
That some erudite Friar
Would run over at once, and examine, and try
her;

For he thought he would find
There was "something behind",
A something that weigh'd on the Old Woman's
mind,—

"In fact he was sure, from what fell from her
tongue,
That this little Old Woman had done some-
thing wrong."

—Then he wound up the whole with this hint
to the man,

"Mind and pick out as holy a friar as you can!"

Now I'd have you to know
That this story of woe,
Which I'm telling you, happen'd a long time
ago;

I can't say exactly *how* long, nor, I own,
What particular monarch was then on the throne,

THE LAY OF THE OLD W

But 't was here in Old England : and all that
It must have preceded the Wars of the Roses.

Inasmuch as the times
Described in these rhymes
Were as fruitful in virtues as ours are in crimes ;
And if 'mongst the Laity
Unseemly gaiety

Sometimes betray'd an occasional taint or two,
At once all the Clerics
Went into hysterics,

While scarcely a convent but boasted its Saint
or two ;

So it must have been long ere the line of the
Tudors,

As since then the breed
Of Saints rarely indeed
With their dignified presence have darken'd
our pew doors.

—Hence the late Mr. Froude, and the live Dr.
Pusey

We moderns consider as each worth a Jew's
eye ;

Though Wiseman and Dullman combine
against Newman,

With Doctors and Proctors, and say he's no
true man.

—But this by the way.—The Convent I speak
about

Had Saints in scores—they said Mass week and
week about ;

And the two now on duty were each, for
their piety,

“ Second to none ” in that holy society,

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

And well might have borne
Those words which are worn
By our "*Nulli Secundus*" Club—poor dear
lost muttons—
Of Guardsmen—on Club days, inscribed
on their buttons:—
They would read, write, and speak
Latin, Hebrew, and Greek,
A radish-bunch munch for a lunch,—or a
leek;
Though scoffers and boobies.
Ascribe certain rubies
That garnished the nose of the good
Father Hilary
To the overmuch use of Canary and Sillery,
—Some said spirituous compounds of
viler distillery—
Ah! little reck'd they
That with Friars, who say
Fifty *Paters* a night, and a hundred a
day,
A very slight sustenance goes a great
way—
Thus the consequence was that his col-
league, Basilius,
Won golden opinions; by looking more
bilious,
From all who conceived strict monastical
duty
By no means conducive to personal beauty;
And being more meagre, and thinner, and
paler,
He was snapt up at once by the bandy-
legg'd Tailor.

THE PLAYS OF THE VOLDOW

The latter's concern
 For a speedy return
 Scarce left the Monk time to put on
 stouter sandals;
 Or go round to his shrines, and snuff all
 his Saint's candles;
 Still less had he leisure to change the
 hair-shirt he
 Had worn the last twenty years—probably
 thirty,—
 Which, not being wash'd all that time,
 had grown dirty.
 —It seems there's a sin in
 The wearing clean linen,
 Which Friars must deschew at the very
 beginning,
 Though it makes them look frowsy, and
 drowsy, and blowsy,
 And—a rhyme—modern etiquette never
 allows ye.—
 As for the rest,
 E'en if time had not prest,
 It didn't much matter—how Basil was
 Nor could there be any great need for
 The Night being almost at odds with the
 Morning.
 Oh! sweet and beautiful is Night, when the
 silver Moon is high,
 And countless Stars, like clustering gems, hang
 sparkling in the sky,

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

While the balmy breath of the summer breeze
comes whispering down the glen,
And one fond voice alone is heard—oh! Night
is lovely then!

But when that voice, in feeble moans of sick-
ness and of pain,
But mocks the anxious ear that strives to catch
its sounds in vain,—

When silently we watch the bed, by the taper's
flickering light,
Where all we love is fading fast—how terrible
is Night!!

More terrible yet,

If you happen to get

By an old woman's bedside, who, all her
life long,

Has been, what the vulgar call “coming
it strong”

In all sorts of ways that are naughty and
wrong.—

As Confessions are sacred, it's not very
facile

To ascertain what the old hag said to
Basil;

But whatever she said,

It filled him with dread,

And made all his hair stand on end on
his head,—

No great feat to perform, inasmuch as said
hair

THE LAY OF THE OLD WOMAN

Being clipped by the tonsure, his crown
Was left bare,

So of course Father Basil had little to spare;
But the little he had

Seem'd as though 't had gone mad,
Each lock, as by action galvanic, uprears
In the two little tufts on the tops of his
ears.—

What the old woman said
That so “fill'd him with dread”,

We should never have known any more
than the dead,

If the bandy-legg'd Tailor, his errand thus
sped,

Had gone quietly back to his needle and
thread,

As he ought; but instead,
Curiosity led,—

A feeling we all deem extremely ill-bred,—
He contrived to secrete himself under the

bed!
—Not that he heard

One half, or a third

Of what passed as the Monk and the
Patient conferred,

But he here and there managed to pick up
a word,

Such as “Knife”,

And “Life”,

And he thought she said “Wife”,

And “Money”, that “source of all evil
and strife”;

Then he plainly distinguished the words
“Gore”, and “Gash”,

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

Whence he deem'd—and I don't think his
inference rash—

She had cut some one's throat for the sake
of his cash!

Intermix'd with her moans,
And her sighs, and her groans,

Enough to have melted the hearts of the
stones,

Came at intervals Basil's sweet, soft, silver
tones,

For somehow it happened—I can't tell
you why—

The good Friar's indignation,—at first
rather high,—

To judge from the language he used in
reply,

Ere the Old Woman ceased, had a good
deal gone by;

And he gently address'd her in accents of
honey,

“Daughter, don't you despair!—WHAT'S
BECOME OF THE MONEY?”

In one just at Death's door, it was really

absurd

To see how her eye lighted up at that word—

Indeed there's not one in the language that I
know,

(Save its synonyms “Spanish”, “Blunt”,
“Stumpy”, and “Rhino”,)

Which acts so direct,

And with so much effect

THE LAY OF THE OLD WOMAN

On the human *sensorium*, or makes one erect
One's ears so, as soon as the sound we detect—
It's a question with me

Which of the three,
Father Basil himself, though a grave S.T.P.
(Such as he have, you see, the degree of D.D.)
Or the eaves-dropping, bandy-legg'd Tailor,—
or She
Caught it quickest—however, traditions agree
That the Old Woman perk'd up as brisk as a
bee,—

'T was the last quivering flare of the taper,—
the fire
It so often emits when about to expire!
Her excitement began the same instant to flag,
She sank back, and whisper'd, "Safe!—Safe!
Look in the Bag!!!"

Now I would not by any means have you sup-
pose
That the good Father Basil was just one of
those

Who entertain views
We're so apt to abuse,
As neither befitting Turks, Christians, nor
— Jews,
Who haunt death-bed scenes,
By underhand means
To toady or teaze people into a legacy,—
For few folk, indeed, had such good right to
beg as he,
Since Rome, in her pure Apostolical beauty,

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

Not only permits, but enjoins, as a duty,

Her sons to take care

That, let who will be heir,

The Pontiff shall not be choused out of his
share,

Nor stand any such mangling of chattels and
goods,

As, they say, was the case with the late Jemmy
Wood's;

Her Conclaves, and Councils, and Synods in
short main-

-tain principles adverse to statutes of *Mortmain*;
Besides you'll discern

It, at once, when you learn

That Basil had something to give in return,

Since it rested with him to say how she should
burn,

Nay, as to her ill-gotten wealth, should she turn
it all

To uses he named, he could say, "You shan't
burn at all,"

Or nothing to signify,

Not what you'd dignify—

So much as even to call it a roast,

But a mere little singeing, or scorching at
most,—

What many would think not unpleasantly
warm,—

Just to keep up appearance,—mere matter of
form".

All this in her ear,

He declared, but I fear

That her senses were wand'ring—she seem'd
not to hear,

THE LAY OF THE WOLDW

Or, at least, understand,—for mere unmeaning
talk her

Parched lips babbled now,—such as “Hookey!”
aid to —and “Walker!”

—She expired, with her last breath expressing
a doubt

If “his Mother were fully aware he was out?”

Now it seems there’s a place they call Pur-
gat’ry—so

I must write it, my verse not admitting the
O—

But as for the *venue*, I vow I’m perplext!

To say if it’s in this world, or if in the next—

Or whether in both—for’t is very well known

That St. Patrick, at least, has got one of his
own,

In a “tight little Island” that stands in a
Lake

Call’d “Lough-dearg”—that’s “The Red
Lake”, unless I mistake—

In Fermanagh—or Antrim—or Donegal—
which

I declare I can’t tell,

But I know very well

It’s in latitude 54, nearly their pitch

(At Tappington, now, I could look in the
Gazetteer,

But I’m out on a visit, and nobody has it here).

There are some, I’m aware,

Who don’t stick to declare

There’s “no differ” at all twixt “this here”
and “that there”,

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

That it's all the same place, but the Saint re-
serves his entry

For the separate use of the "finest of pisentry",

And that his is no more

Than a mere private door

From the *rez-de-chaussée*,—as "some call the

ground floor,—

To the one which the Pope had found out long

before.

But no matter—lay

The *locale* where you may;

—And where it is no one exactly can say—

There's one thing, at least, which is known

very well,

That it acts as a Tap-room to Satan's Hotel.

"Entertainment" there's worse

Both for "Man and for Horse";

For broiling the souls

They use Lord Mayor's coals;—

Then the sulphur's inferior, and boils up much
slower

Than the fine fruity brimstone they give you

down lower,

It's by no means so strong—

Mere sloe-leaves to Souchong;

The "prokers" are not half so hot, or so

long,

By an inch or two, either in handle or prong;

The Vipers and Snakes are less sharp in the

tooth,

And the Nondescript Monsters not near so

uncouth;—

THE LAY OF THE OLD

In short, it's a place the good Pope, its
creator,
Made for what's called by Cockneys a "Minor
The-âtre".
Better suited, of course, for a "minor per-
former",
Than the "House", that's so much better
lighted and warmer,
Below, in that queer place which nobody men-
tions,—

—You understand where,
I don't question—down there,
Where, in lieu of wood blocks, and such modern
inventions,
The Paving Commissioners use "Good Inten-
tions",
Materials which here would be thought on by
few men,
With so many founts of Asphaltic bitumen
At hand, at the same time to pave and illu-
mine.

To go on with my story,
This same Purga-tory,
(There! I've got in the O, to my Muse's great
glory,)
Is close lock'd, and the Pope keeps the keys of
it—that I can
Boldly affirm—in his desk in the Vatican;
—Not those of St. Peter—

These of which I now treat, are
A bunch by themselves, and much smaller and
neater—

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

And so cleverly made, Mr. Chubb could not
frame a

Key better contrived for its purpose—nor Bra-
mah.

Now it seems that by these
Most miraculous keys

Not only the Pope, but his “clergy”, with
ease

Can let people in and out just as they
please;

And—provided you “make it all right” about
fees,

There is not a friar, Dr. Wiseman will own, of
them,

But can always contrive to obtain a short loan
of them;

And Basil, no doubt,
Had brought matters about,

If the little old woman would but have “spoke
out”,

So far as to get for her one of those tickets,
Or passes, which clear both the great gates and

wickets;

So that after a grill,

Or short turn on the Mill,

And with no worse a singeing, (to purge her
iniquity,

Than a Freemason gets in the “Lodge of
Antiquity”,

She'd have rubb'd off old scores,
Popp'd out of doors,

And sheer'd off at once for a happier port,
Like a white-wash'd Insolvent that's “gone
through the Court”.

THE PLAY OF THE OLD WOMAN

But Basil was one
 Who was not to be *done*
 By any one, either in earnest or fun;—
 The cunning old beads-telling son of a gun,
 In all bargains, unless he'd his *quid* for his *quo*,
 Would shake his bald pate, and pronounce it
 "No Go!"
 So unless you're a dunce,
 You'll see clearly, at once,
 When you come to consider the facts of the
 case, he
 Of course never gave her his *Vade in pace*;
 And the consequence was, when the last mortal
 throe
 Released her pale Ghost from these regions of
 woe,
 The little old woman had nowhere to go!
 For, what could she do?
 She very well knew
 If she went to the gates I have mention'd to
 you,
 Without Basil's, or some other passport to
 show,
 The Cheque-takers never would let her go
 through;
 While, as to *the other place*, e'en had she tried
 it,
 And really had wished it, as much as she shied
 it,
 (For no one who knows what it is can abide
 it,)
 Had she knock'd at the portal with ne'er so
 much din,

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

Though she died in, what folks at Rome call,
"Mortal sin",

Yet Old Nick, for the life of him, daren't take
her in,

As she'd not been turn'd formally out of "the
pale";—

So much the bare name of the Pope made him
quail,

In the times that I speak of, his courage would
fail

Of Rome's vassals the lowest and worst to
assail,

Or e'en touch with so much as the end of his
tail;

Though, now he's grown older,

They say he's much bolder,

And his Holiness not only gets the "cold
shoulder",

But Nick rumps him completely, and don't
seem to care

Dump—that's the word—for his triple tiara.

Well—what shall she do?—

What's the course to pursue?—

"Try St. Peter?—the step is a bold one to
take;

For the Saint is, there can't be a doubt, 'wide
awake';

But then there's a quaint

Old Proverb says 'Faint

Heart ne'er won fair Lady'; then how win a
Saint?—

I've a great mind to try—

One can but apply;

THE LAY OF THE OLD

If things come to the worst, why he can but
deny—

The sky, 's rather high

To be sure—but, now I
That cumbersome carcass of clay have laid by,
I am just in the 'order' which some folks—
though why

I am sure I can't tell you—would call 'Apple-
pie'.

Then 'never say die!'—

It won't do to be shy,

So I'll tuck up my shroud, and here goes for
a fly!"

—So said, and so done—she was off like a shot,
And kept on the whole way at a pretty smart
trot.

When she drew so near

That the Saint could see her,

In a moment he frown'd, and began to look
queer,

And scarce would allow her to make her case
clear,

Ere he purs'd up his mouth 'twixt a sneer and
a jeer,

With "It's all very well,—but you do not
lodge here!"—

Then, calling her everything but "My dear!"

He applied his great toe with some force *au*
derrière,

And dismissed her at once with a flea in her
ear.

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

"Alas! poor Ghost!"

It's a doubt which is most
To be pitied—one doom'd to fry, broil, boil,
and roast,—
Or one bandied about thus from pillar to post,—
To be "all abroad"—to be "stump'd" not to
know where

To go—so disgraced
As not to be "placed",
Or, as Crocky would say to Jem Bland, "To
be Nowhere".—

However that be,
The *affaire* was *finie*,
And the poor wretch rejected by all, as you see!

Mr. Oliver Goldsmith observes—not the Jew—
That the "Hare whom the hounds and the
huntsmen pursue",
Having no other sort of asylum in view,
"Returns back again to the place whence she
flew",

A fact which experience has proved to be
true.—

Mr. Gray,—in opinion with whom Johnson
clashes,—

Declares that our "wonted fires live in our
ashes".—

These motives combined, perhaps, brought back
the hag,

The first to her mansion, the last to her bag,
When only conceive her dismay and surprise,
As a Ghost how she open'd her cold stony
eyes,

THE PLAY OF THE OLD WOMAN

When there,—on the spot where she'd hid her
 "supplies",—
 In an underground cellar of very small size,
 Working hard with a spade,
 All at once she survey'd
 That confounded old bandy-legg'd "Tailor by
 trade".

Fancy the tone
 Of the half moan, half groan,
 Which burst from the breast of the Ghost of
 the crone!
 As she stood there,—a figure 'twixt moonshine
 and stone,
 Only fancy the glare in her eyeballs that shone!
 Although, as Macbeth says, "they'd no specu-
 lation",—
 While she utter'd that word,
 Which American Bird,
 Or James Fenimore Cooper, would render
 "Tarnation!!"
 At the noise which she made
 Down went the spade!—
 And up jump'd the bandy-legg'd "Tailor by
 trade",
 (Who had shrewdly conjectured, from some-
 thing that fell, her
 Deposit was somewhere conceal'd in the cel-
 lar;)—
 Turning round at a sound
 So extremely profound,
 The moment her shadowy form met his view
 He gave vent to a sort of a lengthen'd "Bo-o—
 ho-o!"—

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

With a countenance Keeley alone could put on,
Made one grasshopper spring to the door—and
was gone!

Erupit! Evasit!

As at Rome they would phrase it—

His flight was so swift, the eye scarcely could
trace it,

Though elderly, bandy-legg'd, meagre, and
sickly,

I doubt if the Ghost could have vanish'd more
quickly;

He reach'd his own shop, and then fell into
fits,

And it's said never rightly recover'd his wits,
While the chuckling old Hag takes his place,
and there sits!

I'll venture to say,

She'd sat there to this day,
Brooding over what Cobbett calls "vile yellow

clay";

Like a Vulture, or other obscene bird of prey,

O'er the nest-full of eggs she has managed to

lay,

If, as legends relate, and I think we may trust

them, her tale has not been told

Stars had not brought her another guess cus-

tom—

'T was Basil himself!

Come to look for her self:

But not, like the Tailor, to dig, delve, and

grovel,

And grub in the cellar with pickaxe and shovel:

THE LAY OF THE OLD

Full well he knew,
Such tools would not do,—
Far other the weapons he brought into play,
Viz. a Wax-taper “hallow’d on Candlemas-
day”,
To light to her ducats,—
Holy water, two buckets,
(Made with salt—half a peck to four gallons—
which brews a
Strong triple X “strike”,—see Jacobus de
Chusa).
With these, too, he took
His bell and his book—
Not a nerve ever trembled,—his hand never
shook
As he boldly march’d up where she sat in her
nook,
Glow’ring round with that wild indescribable
look,
Which *Some* may have read of, perchance, in
“Nell Cook”,
All, in “Martha the Gipsy” by Theodore
Hook.
And now, for the reason I gave you before,
Of what pass’d then and there I can tell you
no more,
As no Tailor was near with his ear at the door;
But I’ve always been told,
With respect to the gold,
For which she her “jewel eternal” had sold,
That the old Harridan,
Who, no doubt, knew her man,

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

Made some compromise—hit upon some sort
of plan,

By which Friar and Ghost were both equally
pinn'd—

Heaven only knows how the "Agreement" got
in wind;—

But its purpose was this,

That the things done amiss

By the Hag should not hinder her ultimate
bliss;

Provided—"Imprimis,

The cash from this time is

The Church's—impounded for good pious
uses—

—Father B. shall dispose of it just as he
chooses,

And act as trustee—

In the meantime that She,

The said Ghostess,—or Ghost,—as the matter
may be,—

From 'impediment', 'hindrance', and 'let'
shall be free,

To sleep in her grave, or to wander, as he,

The said Friar, with said Ghost, may hereafter
agree.—

Moreover—The whole

Of the said cash, or 'cole',

Shall be spent for the good of said Old Woman's
soul!

"It is further agreed—while said cash is so

spending,

Said Ghost shall be fully absolv'd from attend-
ing,

THE LAY OF THE OLD W

And shall quiet remain
 In the grave, her domain,
 To have, and enjoy, and uphold, and main-
 tain,
 Without molestation, or trouble, or pain,
 Hindrance, let, or impediment (over again)
 From Old Nick, or from anyone else of his
 train,
 Whether Pow'r,—Domination,—or Princedom;
 —or Throne,
 Or by what name soever the same may be
 known,
 Howso'er called by Poets, or styled by
 Divines,—
 Himself,—his executors, heirs, and assigns.

“ Provided that,—nevertheless,—notwithstand-
 ing
 All herein contained,—if whoever's a hand
 in
 Dispensing said cash,—or said ‘cole’,—shall
 dare venture
 To misapply money, note, bill, or debenture
 To uses not named in this present Indenture,
 Then that such sum, or sums, shall revert, and
 come home again
 Back to said Ghost,—who thenceforward shall
 roam again
 Until such time, or times, as the said Ghost
 produces
 Some good man and true, who no longer
 refuses
 To put sum, or sums, aforesaid, to said uses;

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

Which duly performed, the said Ghost shall
have rest;

The full term of her natural death, of the
best;

In full consideration of this, her bequest,

In manner and form aforesaid,—as exprest:—

In witness whereof, we, the parties aforesaid,

Hereunto set our hands and our seals—and no
more said;

Being all that these presents intend to express,

Whereas—notwithstanding—and neverthe-
less.—

Sign'd, sealed, and deliver'd, this 20th of

May,

Anno Domini, blank, (though I've mentioned

the day,)

(Signed)

BASIL.

OLD WOMAN (late) CLOTHED IN GREY."

Basil now, I am told,

Walking off with the gold,

Went and straight got the document duly en-

roll'd,

And left the testatrix to mildew and mould

In her sepulchre, cosey, cool,—not to say cold.

But somehow—though how I can hardly

divine,—

A runlet of fine

Rich Malvoisie wine

Found its way to the Convent that night before

nine,

With custards, and "flawns", and a "fayre

florentine",

THE LAY OF THE OLD WOMAN

Peach, apricot, nectarine, melon, and pine;—
And some half a score Nuns of the rule
of Bridgetine,
Abbess and all, were invited to dine:
At a very late hour,—that is after Compline.—
—Father Hilary's rubies began soon to shine
With fresh lustre, as though newly dug from
the mine;

Through all the next year,
Indeed, 't would appear
That the Convent was much better off, as to
cheer,
Even Basil himself, as I very much fear,
No longer addicted himself to small beer;
His complexion grew clear,
While in front and in rear
He enlarged so, his shape seem'd approaching
a sphere.

No wonder at all, then, one cold winter's
night,
That a servant girl going down stairs with a
light
To the cellar we've spoken of, saw, with
affright,—
An Old Woman, astride on a barrel, invite
Her to take, in a manner extremely polite,
With her left hand, a bag, she had got in her
right;—
For tradition asserts that the Old Woman's
purse
Had come back to her *scarcely one penny the*
worse!

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

The girl, as they say,
Ran screaming away,
Quite scared by the Old Woman clothed in
grey;
But there came down a Knight, at no distant a
day,
Sprightly and gay
As the bird on the spray,
One Sir Rufus Mountfardington, Lord of Foot's-
cray,
Whose estate, not unlike those of most of our
"Swell" beaux,
Was, what 's, by a metaphor, term'd "out at
elbows";
And the fact was, said Knight was now merely
delay'd
From crossing the water to join the Cru-
sade
For converting the Pagans with bill, bow, and
blade,
By the want of a little pecuniary aid
To buy arms and horses, the tools of his
trade,
And enable his troop to appear on parade;
The unquiet Shade
Thought Sir Rufus, 't is said,
Just the man for her money,—she readily
paid
For the articles named, and with pleasure con-
vey'd
To his hands every farthing she ever had
made;
But alas! I'm afraid
Most unwisely she laid

THE PLAY OF THE WOLDW

Out her cash—the *Beaux yeux* of a Saracen
maid

(Truth compels me to say a most pestilent
jade)

Converted the gallant convert—betray'd
Him to do everything which a Knight could
degrade,

—E'en to worship Mahound!—She required—

He obey'd,—
The consequence was, all the money was
wasted

On Infidel pleasures he should not have tasted;
So that, after a very short respite, the Hag
Was seen down in her cellar again with her
bag.

Don't fancy, dear Reader, I mean to go on
Seriatim through so many ages by-gone;

And to bore you with names

Of the Squires and the Dames,
Who have managed, at times, to get hold of the
sack,

But spent the cash so that it always came
back;

The list is too long

To be given in my song,—

There are reasons beside, would perhaps make
it wrong;

I shall merely observe, in those orthodox days,
When Mary set Smithfield all o'er in a blaze,

And show'd herself very se-
-vere against heresy,

While many a wretch scorned to flinch, or to
scream, as he

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

Burnt for denying the Papal supremacy,
Bishop Bonner the bag got,
And all thought the Hag got
Releas'd, as he spent all in fuel and faggot.—
But somehow—though how
I can't tell you, I vow—
I suppose by mismanagement—ere the next
reign
The Spectre had got all her money again.

The last time, I'm told,
That the Old Woman's gold
Was obtained,—as before,—for the asking,—
't was had
By a Mr. O—Something—from Ballinafad;
And the whole of it, so 't is reported, was
sent
To John Wright's, in account for the Catholic
Rent,
And thus—like a great deal more money—
it “went”!

So 't is said at Maynooth,
But I can't think it's truth;
Though I know it was boldly asserted last
season,
Still I can *not* believe it; and that for this
reason,
It's certain *the cash has got back to its owner!*—
—Now no part of the Rent to do so e'er was
known,—or,
In any shape, ever come home to the donor.
GENTLE READER!—you must know the proverb,
I think—

THE LAY OF THE OLD

“To a blind horse a Nod is as good as a Wink!”

Which some learned Chap,
In a square College cap,
Perhaps, would translate by the words “*Verbum Sap!*”

—Now should it so chance
That you’re going to France
In the course of next Spring, as you probably
may,
Do pull up, and stay,
Pray,
If but for a day,
At Dover, through which you must pass on
your way,
At the York,—or the Ship,—where, as all
people say,
You’ll get good wine yourself, and your horses
good hay,
Perhaps, my good friend, you may find it will
pay,
And you cannot lose much by so short a delay.

First DINE!—you can do
That on joint or *ragoût*—
Then say to the waiter,—“I’m just passing
through,—
Pray,—where can I find out the old *Maison*
Dieu?—
He’ll show you the street—(the French call
it a *Rue*,
But you won’t have to give here a *petit écu*).

WOMAN CLOTHED IN GREY

Well,—when you've got there,—never mind
how you're taunted,—

Ask boldly, "Pray, which is the house here
that's haunted?"

—I'd tell you myself, but I can't recollect
The proprietor's name; but he's one of that
sect

Who call themselves "Friends", and whom
others call "Quakers",—

You'll be sure to find out if you ask at the
Baker's,—

Then go down with a light,
To the cellar at night!

And as soon as you see her don't be in a fright;
But ask the old Hag,
At once, for the bag!—

If you find that she's shy, or your senses would
dazzle,

Say, "Ma'am, I insist!—in the name of St.
Basil!"

If she gives it you, seize
It, and—do as you please—

But there is not a person I've ask'd but agrees,
You should spend—part at least—for the Old
Woman's ease!

—For the rest—if it *must* go back some day—
why—let it!—

Meanwhile, if you're poor, and in love, or in
debt, it

May do you some good, and—

I WISH YOU MAY GET IT!!!

WOMAN GROWN IN CARE

Well—where you got that,—where will
I do you to mind—
Are really, I say, which is the more here
that's human?
—I don't know, but I can't forget
The proprietor's name; but he's one of them
seen
Who call themselves "Friends," and whom
others call "Quakers,"—
You'll be sure to find out if you go to the
center—
Then go down with a light
To the water at night!
And as soon as you see her don't be in a hurry
But say the wife is
A once, for the first—
If you find her in a way, or your feet are
tired
Say, "My dear, I insist—in the name of the
Bible!"
If she lives it's your business
To send—do as you please—
But there is not a person I so wish to see
You should spend—out at least—for the Old
Woman's sake!
For the rest—let it wait no day longer—
say—let it—
Remember if you're good, and in good luck
that's
They do but come good, and—
I don't see what can be!

The Lord of Thoulouse

A LEGEND OF LANGUEDOC.

Veluti in speculum.

—*Theatre Royal. Cov. Gard.*

COUNT RAYMOND rules in Languedoc,
O'er the champaign fair and wide,
With town and stronghold many a one,
Wash'd by the wave of the blue Garonne,
And from far Auvergne to Rousillon,
And away to Narbonne,
And the mouths of the Rhone;
And his Lyonnois silks, and his Narbonne
honey
Bring in his lordship a great deal of money.

A thousand lances, stout and true,
Attend Count Raymond's call;
And Knights and Nobles, of high degree,
From Guienne, Provence, and Burgundy,
Before Count Raymond bend the knee,
And vail to him one and all.

And Isabel of Arragon
He weds, the Pride of Spain,
You might not find so rich a prize,

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

A Dame so "healthy, wealthy, and wise";
So pious withal—with such beautiful eyes—
So exactly the Venus de' Medici's size—
In all that wide domain.

Then his cellar is stored
As well as his board,
With the choicest of all *La Belle France* can
afford;
Chambertin, Château Margaux, La Rose, and
Lafitte,
With Moët's Champagne, "of the Comet
year", "neat
As imported",—"fine sparkling",—and not
over sweet;
While his Chaplain, good man, when call'd in
to say grace,
Would groan, and put on an elongated face
At such turtle, such turbot, John Dory, and
plaice;
Not without blushing, pronouncing a benison;
Worthy old soul! on such *very* fat venison,
Sighing to think
Such victuals and drink
Are precisely the traps by which Satan makes
men his own,
And grieving o'er scores
Of huge barbecued Boars,
Which he thinks should not darken a Christian
man's doors,
Though 't was all very well Pagan Poets should
rate 'em
As "*Animal propter convivia natum*".

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

He was right, I must say,
For at this time of day,
When we're not so precise, whether cleric or
lay,
With respect to our food, as in time so *passé*,
We still find our Boars, whether grave ones or
gay,
After dinner, at least, very much in the way,
(We spell the word now with an E, not an A;)
And as honest *Père Jacques* was inclined to
spare diet, he
Gave this advice to all grades of society,
"Think less of pudding—and think more of
piety".

As to his clothes,
Oh! nobody knows
What lots the Count had of cloaks, doublets,
and hose,
Pantoufles, with bows
Each as big as a rose,
And such shirts with lace ruffles, such waist-
coats, and those
Indescribable garments it is not thought right
To do more than whisper to *oreilles* polite.

Still in spite of his power, and in spite of his
riches,
In spite of his dinners, his dress, and his——
which is
The strangest of all things—in spite of his
Wife,
The Count led a rather hum-drum sort of life.

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

He grew tired, in fact, of mere eating and
drinking,
Grew tired of flirting, and ogling, and winking
At nursery maids
As they walked the Parades,
The Crescents, the Squares, and the fine
Colonnades,
And the other gay places, which young ladies
use
As their *promenade* through the good town of
Thoulouse.
He was tired of hawking, and fishing, and
hunting,
Of billiards, short-whist, chicken-hazard, and
punting;
Of popping at pheasants,
Quails, woodcocks, and—peasants:
Of smoking, and joking,
And soaking, provoking
Such headaches next day
As his fine St. Peray,
Though the best of all Rhone wines can never
repay,
Till weary of war, women, roast-geese, and
glory,
With no great desire to be “famous in story”,
All the day long,
This was his song,
“Oh, dear! what will become of us?
Oh, dear! what shall we do?
We shall die of blue devils if some of us
Can’t hit on something that’s new!”

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

Meanwhile his sweet Countess, so pious and good,

Such pomps and such vanities stoutly eschew'd,
With all fermented liquors and high-seasoned food,

Devilled kidneys, and sweet-breads, and ducks and green peas;

Baked sucking-pig, goose, and all viands like these,

Hash'd calf's-head included, no longer could please,

A curry was sure to elicit a breeze,

So was ale, or a glass of port-wine after cheese,

Indeed, anything strong,

As to tippie, was wrong;

She stuck to "fine Hyson", "Bohea", and "Souchong",

And similar imports direct from Hong-Kong,

In vain does the family Doctor exhort her

To take with her chop one poor half-pint of porter;

No!—she alleges

She's taken the pledges!

Determined to aid

In a gen'ral Crusade

Against publicans, vintners, and all of that trade,

And to bring in sherbet, ginger-pop, lemonade,
Eau sucrée, and drinkables mild and home made;

So she claims her friends' efforts, and vows to devote all hers

Solely to found "The Thoulousian Teetotalers".

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

Large sums she employs
In dressing small boys
In long duffle jackets, and short corderoys,
And she boxes their ears when they make too
much noise;
In short, she turns out a complete Lady Boun-
tiful,
Filling with drugs and brown Holland the
county full.

Now just at the time when our story com-
mences,
It seems that a case
Past the common took place,
To entail on her ladyship further expenses,
In greeting with honour befitting his station
The Prior of Arles, with a Temperance Lega-
tion,
Dispatched by Pope Urban, who seized this
occasion
To aid in diluting that part of the nation,
An excellent man,
One who stuck to his can
Of cold water "without"—and he'd take such
a lot of it;
None of your sips
That just moisten the lips;
At one single draught he'd toss off a whole pot
of it,—
No such bad thing
By the way, if they bring
It you iced as at Verey's, or fresh from the
spring,

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

When the Dog Star compels folks in town to
take wing,

Though I own even then I should see no great
sin in it,

Were there three drops of Sir Felix's gin in it.

Well, leaving the lady to follow her pleasure,
And finish the pump with the Prior at leisure;

Let's go back to Raymond, still bored beyond
measure,

And harping away,

On the same dismal lay,

"Oh dear! what will become of us?"

Oh dear! what can we do?

We shall die of blue devils if some of us

Can't find out something that's new!"

At length in despair of obtaining his ends
By his own mother wit, he takes courage and
sends,

Like a sensible man as he is; for his friends,
Not his Lyndhursts or Eldons, or any such
high sirs,

But only a few of his "backstairs" advisers;

"Come hither," says he,

"My gallants so free,

My bold Rigmarole, and my brave Rigmaree,

And my grave Baron Proser, now listen to me!

You three can't but see I'm half dead with
ennui.

What's to be done?

I *must* have some fun,

And I will too, that's flat—ay, as sure as a
gun.

So find me out 'something new under the sun',

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

Or I'll knock your three jobbernowls all into
one!

You three
Agree!

Come, what shall it be?

Resolve me—propound in three skips of a
flea!"

Rigmarole gave a "Ha!" Rigmarée gave a
"Hem";

They look'd at Count Raymond—Count Ray-
mond at them,

As much as to say "Have you *nihil ad rēm*?"

At length Baron Proser

Responded, "You know, sir,"

That question's some time been a regular
poser;

Dear me!—let me see,—

In the way of a 'spre'e'

Something new?—Eh!—No!—Yes!—No!—

't is really nō go, sir."

Says the Count, "Rigmarole,

You're as jolly a soul,

On the whole, as King Cole, with his pipe and
his bowl;

Come, I'm sure you'll devise something novel
and droll."—

In vain—Rigmarole, with a look most pro-
found,

With his hand to his heart and his eye to the
ground,

Shakes his head as if nothing was there to be
found.

"I can only remark,

That as touching a 'lark'

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

I'm as much as your Highness can be, in the dark;

I can hit on no novelty—none, on my life, unless, peradventure, you'd 'tea' with your wife!"

Quoth Raymond, "Enough!"

Nonsense!—humbug!—fudge!—stuff!

Rigmarole, you're an ass,—you're a regular Muff!

Drink tea with her ladyship?—I?—not a bit of it!

Call you that fun?—faith, I can't see the wit of it;

Mort de ma vie!

My dear Rigmaree,

You're the man, after all,—come, by way of a fee,

If you will but be bright, from the simple degree

Of a knight I'll create you at once a *Marquis*!

Put your conjuring cap on—consider and see, If you can't beat that stupid old 'Sumph' with his 'tea'!"

"That's the thing! that will do!"

Ay, marry, that's new!"

Cries Rigmaree, rubbing his hands, "that will please—

My '*Conjuring cap*'—it's the thing;—it's 'the cheese'!

It was only this morning I pick'd up the news; Please your Highness, a *Conjuror's* come to Thoulouse;

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

I'll defy you to name us
A man half so famous
For devildoms,—Sir, it's the great Nostra-
damus!
Cornelius Agrippa 't is said went to school to
him,
Gyngell's an ass, and old Faustus a fool to
him;
Talk of Lilly, Albertus, Jack Dee!—pooh! all
six
He'd soon put in a pretty particular fix;
Why, he'd beat at digesting a sword, or 'Gun
tricks'
The great Northern Wizard himself all to
sticks!
I should like to see you,
Try to *sauter le coup*
With this chap at short whist, or unlimited
loo,
By the Pope you'd soon find it a regular
'Do':
Why, he does as he likes with the cards,—
when he's got 'em,
There's always an Ace or a King at the bot-
tom;
Then for casting Nativities!—only you look
At the volume he's publish'd,—that wonderful
book!
In all France not another, to swear I dare
venture, is
Like, by long chinks, his 'Prophetical Cen-
turies'—
Don't you remember how, early last summer,
he

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

Warn'd the late King 'gainst the Tournament
mummery?

Didn't his Majesty call it all flummery,

Scorning

The warning,

And get the next morning

His poke in the eye from that clumsy Mont-
gomery?

Why, he'll tell you, before

You're well inside his door,

All your Highness may wish to be up to, and
more!"

"Bravo!—capital!—come, let's disguise our-
selves—quick!

—Fortune's sent him on purpose here, just in
the nick;

We'll see if old Hocus will smell out the
trick;

Let's start off at once—Rigmaree, you're a
Brick!"

The moon in gentle radiance shone

O'er lowly roof and lordly bower,

O'er holy pile and armed tower,

And danced upon the blue Garonne:

Through all that silver'd city fair,

No sound disturb'd the calm, cool air,

Save the lover's sigh alone!

Or where, perchance, some slumberer's nose

Proclaim'd the depth of his repose,

Provoking from connubial toes

A hint—or elbow bone;

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

It might, with such trifling exceptions, be said,
That Thoulouse was as still as if Thoulouse
were dead,
And her "oldest inhabitant" buried in lead.

But hark! a sound invades the ear,
Of horses' hoofs advancing near!
They gain the bridge—they pass—they're
here!
Side by side
Two strangers ride,
For the streets in Thoulouse are sufficiently
wide,
That is, I'm assured they are—not having tried.
—See, now they stop
Near an odd-looking shop,
And they knock, and they ring, and they won't
be denied.
At length the command
Of some unseen hand
Chains, and bolts, and bars obey,
And the thick-ribb'd oaken door, old and
grey,
In the pale moonlight gives, slowly, way.
They leave their steeds to a page's care,
Who comes mounted behind on a Flanders
mare,
And they enter the house, that resolute pair,
With a blundering step, but a dare-devil air,
And ascend a long, darksome, and rickety stair;
While, arm'd with a lamp that just helps you
to see
How uncommonly dark a place can be,

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

The grimmest of lads with the grimmest of
grins,
Says, "Gentlemen, please to take care of your
shins!

Who ventures this road need be firm on his
pins!
Now turn to the left—now turn to the right—
Now a step—now stoop—now again upright—
Now turn once again, and directly before ye
's the door of the great Doctor's Laboratory."

A word! a blow!
And in they go!

No time to prepare, or to get up a show,
Yet everything there they find quite *comme il
faut*:

Such as queer-looking bottles and jars in a
row,
Retorts, crucibles, such as all conjurers stow
In the rooms they inhabit, huge bellows to
blow

The fire burning blue with its sulphur and
taw;
From the roof a huge crocodile hangs rather
low,

With a tail such as that, which, we all of us
know,

Mr. Waterton managed to tie in a bow;
Pickled snakes, potted lizards, in bottles and
basins

Like those at Morel's, or at Fortnum and
Mason's,
All articles found, you're aware without telling,
In every respectable conjuror's dwelling.

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

Looking solemn and wise,
Without turning his eyes,
Or betraying the slightest degree of surprise,
In the midst sits the doctor—his hair is white,
And his cheek is wan—but his glance is bright,
And his long black roquelaure, not over tight,
Is marked with strange characters much, if not
quite,
Like those on the bottles of green and blue
light
Which you see in a chymist's shop-window at
night.
His figure is tall and erect—rather spare about
Ribs;—and no wonder—such folks never care
about
Eating or drinking,
While reading and thinking
Don't fatten—his age might be sixty or there-
about.
Raising his eye so grave and so sage,
From some manuscript work of a bygone age,
The seer very composedly turns down the
page,
Then shading his sight,
With his hand from the light,
Says, "Well, Sirs, what would you at this
time of night?
What brings you abroad these lone chambers
to tread,
When all sober folks are at home and abed?"
"Trav'lers we,
In our degree,

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

All strange sights we fain would see,
And hither we come in company;
We have far to go, and we come from far,
Through Spain and Portingale, France and
Navarre;

We have heard of your name,
And your fame, and our aim,
Great Sir, is to witness, ere yet we depart
From Thoulouse,—and to-morrow at cock-
crow we start—
Your skill—we would fain crave a touch of
your art!”

“Now naye, now naye—no trav’lers ye!
Nobles ye be
Of high degree!
With half an eye that one may easily see,—
Count Raymond, your servant!—Yours, Lord
Rigmaree!
I must call you so now, since you’re made a
Mar-quis;
Faith, clever boys both, but you can’t humbug
me!

No matter for that!
I see what you’d be at—
Well—pray no delay,
For it’s late, and ere day
I myself must be hundreds of miles on my
way;
So tell me at once what you want with me—
say!
Shall I call up the dead
From their mouldering bed?—

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

Shall I send you yourselves down to Hades
instead?—

Shall I summon old Harry himself to this
spot?"

—"Ten thousand thanks, No! we had much
rather not.

We really can't say

That we're curious that way;

But, in brief, if you'll pardon the trouble we're
giving,

We'd much rather take a sly peep at the
living!

Rigmaree, what say you, in

This case, as to viewing

Our spouses, and just ascertain what they're
doing?"

"Just what pleases your Highness—I don't
care! a *sous* in

The matter—but don't let old Nick and his
crew in!"

—"Agreed!—pray proceed then, most sage
Nostradamus,

And show us our *wives*—I dare swear they
won't shame us!"

A change comes o'er the wizard's face,
And his solemn look by degrees give place
To a half grave, half comical, kind of grimace.

"For good or for ill,

I work your will!

Yours be the risk and mine the skill;

Blame not my art if unpleasant the
pill!"

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

He takes from a shelf, and he pops on his
head,

A square sort of cap, black, and turned up with
red,

And desires not a syllable more may be said;

He goes on to mutter,

And stutter, and sputter

Hard words, such as no men but wizards dare
utter.

“Dies mies!—Hocus pocus—

Adsis Demon! non est jokus!

Hi Cocolorum—don’t provoke us!—

Adesto!

Presto!

Put forth your best toe!”

And many more words, to repeat which would
choke us;—

Such a sniff then of brimstone!—it did not last
long,

Or they could not have borne it, the smell was
so strong.

A mirror is near,

So large and so clear,

If you priced such a one in a drawing-room
here,

And was ask’d fifty pounds, you’d not say it
was dear;

But a mist gather’d round at the words of the
seer,

Till at length, as the gloom

Was subsiding, a room

On its broad polish’d surface began to appear,

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

And the Count and his comrade saw plainly
before 'em

The room Lady Isabel called her "*Sanctorum*".

They start, well they might,

With surprise at the sight,

Methinks I hear some lady say, "Serve 'em
right!"

For on one side the fire

Is seated the Prior,

At the opposite corner a fat little Friar;

By the side of each gentleman, easy and free,

Sits a lady, as close as close well may be;

She might almost as well have been perch'd on
his knee.

Dear me! dear me!

Why, one's Isabel—she

On the opposite side's *La Marquise Rigmarée*!

To judge from the spread

On the board, you'd have said

That the *partie quarrée* had like aldermen fed,

And now from long flasks with necks cover'd
with lead,

They were helping themselves to champagne,
white and red,

Hobbing and nobbing,

And nodding and bobbing,

With many a sip

Both from cup and from lip,

And with many a toast followed up by a

"Hip!—

Hip!—hip!—huzzay!"

—The Count, by the way,

Though he sees all they're doing, can't hear
what they say,

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

Notwithstanding both he
And *Mar-quis Rigmaree*
Are so vex'd and excited at what they can see,
That each utters a sad word beginning with D.

That word once spoke,
The silence broke,
In an instant the vision is cover'd with smoke!
But enough has been seen. "Horse! horse!
and away!"

They have, neither, the least inclination to
stay,
E'en to thank Nostradamus, or ask what's to
pay.—

They rush down the stair,
How, they know not, nor care,
The next moment the Count is astride on his
bay,
And my Lord Rigmaree on his mettlesome
grey;

They dash through the town,
Now up, and now down;
And the stones rattle under their hoofs as they
ride,
As if poor Thoulouse were as mad as Cheap-
side:

Through lane, alley, and street,
Over all that they meet;
The Count leads the way on his courser so
fleet,
My Lord Rigmaree close pursuing his beat,
With the page in the rear to protect the re-
treat.

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

Where the bridge spans the river, so wide and
so deep,
Their headlong career o'er the causeway they
keep,
Upsetting the watchman, two dogs, and a
sweep,
All the town population that was not asleep.
They at length reach the castle, just outside the
town,
Where—in peace it was usual with Knights of
renown—
The portcullis was up, and the drawbridge was
down.
They dash by the sentinels—“*France et Thoulouse!*”
Ev'ry soldier (—they then wore cock'd hats and
long queues,
Appendages banish'd from modern reviews)
His arquebus lower'd, and bow'd to his shoes;
While Count Raymond pushed on to his lady's
boudoir—he
Had made up his mind to make one at her
soirée.
He rush'd to that door,
Where ever before,
He had rapp'd with his knuckles, and “tirl'd
at the pin”,
Till he heard the soft sound of his Lady's
“Come in!”
But now, with a kick from his iron-heel'd boot,
Which, applied to a brick wall, at once had
gone through't,
He dash'd open the lock;
It gave way at the shock!

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

(—Dear ladies, I don't think, in recording the
fact, but even if I did, I should not
That your bard's for one moment defending
the act, which are the very essence of
No—it is not a gentleman's—none but a low
body (like you, I say, I say)
No—could perform it)—and there he saw—
NOBODY!!
Nobody?—No!!

Oh, ho!—Oh, ho!
There was not a table—there was not a chair
Of all that Count Raymond had ever seen
there.
(They'd maroon-leather bottoms well stuff'd
with horse-hair),
That was out of its place!

There was not a trace
Of a party—there was not a dish or a plate—
No sign of a table-cloth—nothing to prate
Of a supper, *symposium*, or sitting up late;
There was not a spark of fire left in the grate,
It had all been poked out, and remain'd in that
state.

If there was not a fire,
Still less was there Friar,
Marquise, or long glasses, or Countess, or Prior,
And the Count, who rush'd in open mouth'd,
was struck dumb,
And could only ejaculate, "Well!—this is rum!"

He rang for the maids—had them into the
room
With the butler, the footman, the coachman,
the groom,

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

He examined them all very strictly—but no!
Notwithstanding he cross- and re-question'd
them so,

'T was in vain—it was clearly a case of “No
Go!”

“Their Lady,” they said,

“Had gone early to bed,

Having rather complain'd of a cold in her
head—

The stout little Friar, as round as an apple,
Had pass'd the whole night in a vigil in
chapel,

While the Prior himself, as he'd usually done,
Had rung in the morning, at half-after one,
For his jug of cold water and twopenny bun,
And been visible, since they were brought him,
to none.

But,” the servants averr'd;

“From the sounds that were heard

To proceed now and then from the father's
sacellum,

They thought he was purging

His sins with a scourging,

And making good use of his knotted *flagellum*.”

For Madame Rigmaree,

They all testified, she

Had gone up to her bed-chamber soon after
tea,

And they really supposed that there still she
must be,

Which her spouse, the *Mar-quis*,

Found at once to agree

With the rest of their tale, when he ran up to
see.

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

Alack for Count Raymond! he could not conceive

How the case really stood, or know *what* to believe;

Nor could Rigmaree settle to laugh or to grieve.

There was clearly a hoax,

But which of the folks

Had managed to make them the butt of their jokes,

Wife or wizard, they both knew no more than Jack Nokes;

That glass of the wizard's

Stuck much in their gizzards,

His cap, and his queer cloak, all X's and Izzards;

Then they found, when they came to examine again,

Some slight falling off in the stock of champagne,

Small, but more than the butler could fairly explain.

However, since nothing could make the truth known,

Why,—they thought it was best to let matters alone.

The Count in the garden

Begg'd Isabel's pardon

Next morning for waking her up in a fright,

By the racket he'd kick'd up at that time of night:

And gave her his word he had ne'er misbehaved so,

Had he not come home as tipsy as David's sow.

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

Still, to give no occasion for family snarls,
The Friar was pack'd back to his convent at
Arles,

While as for the Prior,

At Raymond's desire,
The Pope raised his rev'rence a step or two
higher,

And made him a bishop *in partibus*—where
His see was I cannot exactly declare,
Or describe his cathedral, not having been
there,

But I dare say you'll all be prepared for the
news,

When I say 't was a good many miles from
Thoulouse,

Where the prelate, in order to set a good pre-
cedent,

Was enjoind, as a *sine quâ non*, to be resident.

You will fancy with me,

That Count Raymond was free,

For the rest of his life, from his former *ennui*;

Still it somehow occur'd that as often as he
Chanced to look in the face of my Lord Rig-
maree,

There was something or other—a trifling
degree

Of constraint—or embarrassment—easy to see,
And which seem'd to be shared by the noble

Mar-quis,
While the ladies—the queerest of all things by
half in

My tale, never met from that hour without
laughing.

THE LORD OF THOULOUSE

MORAL

Good gentlemen all, who are subjects of
Hymen,
Don't make new acquaintances rashly, but try
men,
Avoid above all things your cunning (that's
sly) men!
Don't go out o' nights
To see conjuring sleights,
But shun all such people, delusion whose trade
is;
Be wise!—stay at home and take tea with the
ladies.

If you *chance* to be out,
At a "regular bout",
And get too much of "Abbot's Pale Ale" or
"Brown Stout",
Don't be cross when you come home at night
to your spouse,
Nor be noisy, nor kick up a dust in the house!

Be careful yourself, and admonish your sons,
To beware of all folks who love twopenny buns!
And don't introduce to your wife or your
daughter,
A sleek, meek, weak gent—who subsists on
cold water!

THE LURE

That yesterday and the day before
Hymn
Don't know what to do with you
I wish you all things your country (but
I wish you all things your country (but
I wish you all things your country (but
I wish you all things your country (but
I wish you all things your country (but
I wish you all things your country (but
I wish you all things your country (but
I wish you all things your country (but
I wish you all things your country (but

If you come to the end
If you come to the end
And get too much of a good thing
And get too much of a good thing
And get too much of a good thing
And get too much of a good thing
And get too much of a good thing
And get too much of a good thing
And get too much of a good thing
And get too much of a good thing
And get too much of a good thing

The Blasphemer's Warning

A LAY OF ST. ROMWOLD

[Mox Regina filium peperit a multis optatum et a Deo sanctificatum. Cumque Infans natus fuisset, statim clarâ voce, omnibus audientibus, clamavit "*Christianus sum! Christianus sum! Christianus sum!*" Ad hanc vocem Presbyteri duo, Widerinus et Edwoldus, dicentes *Deo Gratias*, et omnes qui aderant mirantes, cœperunt cantare *Te Deum laudamus*. Quo facto rogabat Infans cathecumenum a Widerino sacerdote fieri, et ab Edwoldo teneri ad præsignaculum fidei et Romwoldum vocari.—Nov. LEGEND. ANGL. IN VITA SCTI ROMUALDI.]

In Kent, we are told,
There was seated of old,
A handsome young gentleman, courteous and
bold,
He'd an oaken strong-box, well replenish'd
with gold,
With broad lands, pasture, arable, woodland,
and wold,
Not an acre of which had been mortgaged or
sold;
He'd a Plesaunce and Hall passing fair to
behold,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

He had beeves in the byre, he had flocks in the fold,

And was somewhere about five-and-twenty years old.

His figure and face,

For beauty and grace,

To the best in the county had scorn'd to give place.

Small marvel then,

If, of women and men

Whom he chanced to foregather with, nine out of ten

Express'd themselves charm'd with Sir Alured Denne.

From my earliest youth,
I've been taught, as a truth,

A maxim which most will consider as sooth,

Though a few, peradventure, may think it uncouth;

There are three social duties, the whole of the swarm

In this great human hive of ours, ought to perform,

And that too as soon as conveniently may be;

The first of the three—

Is, the planting a Tree!

The next, the producing a Book—then, a Baby!

(For my part, dear Reader, without any jesting, I

So far at least, have accomplish'd my destiny.)

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

From the foremost, i.e. early study and
The "planting the Tree", and the old W
The Knight may, perchance, have conceiv'd
himself free,
Inasmuch as that, which way soever he looks,
Over park, mead, or upland, by streamlets and
brooks,
His fine beeches and elms shelter thousands of
rooks;

In twelve eighty-two,
There would also accrue
Much latitude as to the article, Books;
But, if those we've disposed of, and need not
recall,
Might, as duties, appear in comparison small,
One remain'd, there was no getting over at all,
—The providing a male Heir for Bonnington
Hall;
Which, doubtless, induced the good Knight to
decide,

As a matter of conscience, on taking a Bride.
It's a very fine thing, and delightful to see
Inclination and duty unite and agree,

Because it's a case
That so rarely takes place;
In the instance before us, then, Alured Denne
Might well be esteem'd the most lucky of men,
Inasmuch as hard by,
Indeed so very nigh,
That her chimneys, from his, you might almost
descry,
Dwelt a Lady at whom he'd long cast a sheep's
eye,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

One whose character scandal itself could defy,
While her charms and accomplishments rank'd
Very high,

And who would not deny

A propitious reply,

But reflect back his blushes, and give sigh for
sigh.

(A line that's not mine, but Tom Moore's,
by the by.)

There was many a gay and trim bachelor near,
Who felt sick at heart when the news met his
ear,

That fair Edith Ingoldsby, she whom they all
The "Rosebud of Tappington" ceas'd not to
call,

Was going to say,

"Honour, love, and obey"

To Sir Alured Denne, Knight, of Bonnington
Hall,

That all other suitors were left in the lurch,
And the parties had even been "out-asked" in
church,

For every one says,

In those primitive days,

And I must own I think it redounds to their
praise,

None dream'd of transferring a daughter or
niece

As a bride, by an "unstamp'd agreement", or
lease,

'Fore a Register's Clerk, or a Justice of Peace,
While young ladies had fain
Single women remain,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

And unwedded maids to the last "crack of
doom" stick,
Ere marry, by taking a jump o'er a broomstick.

So our bride and bridegroom agreed to appear
At holy St. Romwold's, a Priory near,
Which a long while before, I can't say in what
year,

Their forebears had join'd with the neighbours
to rear,

And endow'd, some with bucks, some with
beef, some with beer,

To comfort the friars, and make them good
cheer,

Adorning the building,

With carving and gilding,

And stone altars, fix'd to the chantries and
fill'd in;

(Papistic in substance and form, and on this
count

With Judge Herbert Jenner Fust justly at
discount,

See *Cambridge Societas Camdeniensis*

V: *Faulkner, tert. prim. Januarii mensis,*

With "Judgment reversed, costs of suit, and
expenses";)

All raised to St. Romwold, with some reason,
styled

By Duke Humphrey's confessor, "a Wonderful
Child",

For ne'er yet was Saint, except him, upon earth
Who made "his profession of faith" at his
birth,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

And when scarce a foot high, or six inches in
girth,
Converted his "Ma", and contrived to amend a
Sad hole in the creed of his grandsire, King
Penda.

Of course to the shrine
Of so young a divine
Flow'd much holy water, and some little wine,
And when any young folks did to marriage
incline,
The good friars were much in request, and not
one

Was more "sought unto" than the Sub-prior,
Mess John;

To him, there and then,

Sir Alured Denne

Wrote a three-corner'd note with a small
crow-quill pen,
To say what he wanted, and fix "the time
when",

And, as it's well known that your people of
quality

Pique themselves justly on strict punctuality,
Just as the clock struck the hour he'd nam'd
in it,

The whole bridal party rode up to the minute.

Now whether it was that some rapturous
dream,

Comprehending "fat pullets and clouted
cream",

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

Had borne the good man, in his vision of bliss,
Far off to some happier region than this—
Or whether his beads, 'gainst the fingers re-
belling,

Took longer than usual that morning in telling;
Or whether, his conscience with knotted cord
purging,

Mess John was indulging himself with a
scourging,

In penance for killing some score of the fleas,
Which, infesting his hair-shirt, deprived him
of ease,

Or whether a barrel of Faversham oysters,
Brought in, on the evening before, to the
cloisters,

Produced indigestion,

Continues a question:

The particular cause is not worth a debate;
For my purpose it's clearly sufficient to state
That whatever the reason, his rev'rence was
illate,

And Sir Alured Denne,
Not the meekest of men,
Began banning away at a deuce of a rate.

Now here, though I do it with infinite pain,
Gentle reader, I find I must pause to explain

That there was—what, I own,

I grieve to make known—

On the worthy Knight's character one single
stain,

But for which, all his friends had borne witness
I'm sure,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

He had been *sans reproche*, as he still was *sans*
peur.

The fact is, that many distinguish'd com-
manders

"Swore terribly (*teste* T. Shandy) in Flanders".

Now into these parts our Knight chancing to
go, countries

Named from this sad, vulgar custom, "The
Low Countries",

Though on common occasions as courteous as
daring,

Had pick'd up this shocking bad habit of
swearing,

And if anything vex'd him, or matters went
wrong,

Was given to what low folks call "Coming it
strong".

Good, bad, or indifferent then, young or old,
He'd consign them, when once in a humour
to scold,

To a place where they certainly would not
take cold.

—Now if there are those, and I've some in
my eye,

Who'd esteem this a crime of no very deep
dye,

Let them read on—they'll find their mistake
by and by.

Near or far,
Few people there are

But have heard, read, or sung about Young
Lochinvar,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

How in Netherby Chapel, "at morning tide",
The Priest and the Bridegroom stood waiting
the Bride;

How they waited, "but ne'er

A Bride was there".

Still I don't find, on reading the ballad with
care,

The bereaved Mr. Graham proceeded to swear,
And yet to experience so serious a blight in
One's dearest affections, is somewhat exciting.

'Tis manifest then

That Sir Alured Denne

Had far less excuse for such bad language, when
It was only the Priest not the Bride who was
missing—

He had fill'd up the interval better with kissing.

And 't was really surprising,

And not very wise in

A Knight to go on so anathematising,

When the head and the front of the Clergy-
man's crime

Was but being a little behind as to time:—

Be that as it may,

He swore so that day

At the reverend gentleman's ill-judged delay,
That not a bystander who heard what he said,
But listen'd to all his expressions with dread,
And felt all his hair stand on end on his head;

Nay, many folks there

Did not stick to declare

The phenomenon was not confined to the hair,
For the little stone Saint who sat perch'd o'er
the door,

St. Romwold himself, as I told you before,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

What will scarce be believed,
Was plainly perceived
To shrug up his shoulders, as very much grieved,
And look down with a frown

So remarkably brown,
That all saw he'd now quite a different face on
From that he received at the hands of the mason;
Nay, many averr'd he half rose in his niche,
When Sir Alured, always in metaphor rich,
Call'd his priest an "old son of—" some
animal—which,

Is not worth the inquiry—a hint's quite
enough on
The subject—for more I refer you to Buffon.

It's supposed that the Knight
Himself saw the sight,
And it's likely he did, as he easily might,
For 't is certain he paused in his wordy attack
And, in nautical language, seem'd a "taken
aback".

In so much that when now
The "prime cause of the row",
Father John, in the chapel at last made his bow,
The Bridegroom elect was so mild and subdued
None could ever suppose he'd been noisy and
rude,
Or made use of the language to which I allude;
Fair Edith herself, while the knot was a tying,
Her bridesmaids around her, some sobbing,
some sighing,
Some smiling, some blushing, half-laughing,
half-crying,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

Scarce made her responses in tones more complying

Than he who'd been raging and storming so recently,

All softness now, and behaving quite decently.

Many folks thought too the cold stony frown
Of the Saint up aloft from his niche looking
down,

Brought the sexton and clerk each an extra
half-crown,

When, the rite being over, the fees were all paid,
And the party remounting, the whole cavalcade
Prepared to ride home with no little parade.

In a climate so very unsettled as ours
It's as well to be cautious and guard against
showers,

For though, about One,

You've a fine brilliant sun,

When your walk or your ride is but barely
begun,

Yet long ere the hour-hand approaches the Two,
There is not in the whole sky one atom of blue,
But it "rains cats and dogs", and you're fairly
wet through

Ere you know where to turn, what to say, or
to do;

For which reason I've bought, to protect my-
self well, a

Good stout *Taglioni* and gingham umbrella,
But in Edward the First's days I very much
fear

Had a gay cavalier
Thought fit to appear

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

In any such "toggery"—then 't was term'd
"gear"—

He'd have met with a highly significant sneer,
Or a broad grin extending from ear unto ear
On the features of every soul he came near;
There was no taking refuge too then, as with us,
On a slip-sloppy day, in a cab or a 'bus;

As they rode through the woods

In their wimples and hoods,
Their only resource against sleet, hail, or rain
Was, as Spenser describes it, to "pryck o'er
the plaine";

That is, to clap spurs on, and ride helter-skelter
In search of some building or other for shelter.

Now it seems that the sky,

Which had been of a dye

As bright and as blue as your lady-love's eye,
The season in fact being genial and dry,

Began to assume

An appearance of gloom
From the moment the Knight began fidget and
fume,

Which deepen'd and deepen'd till all the horizon
Grew blacker than aught they had ever set
eyes on,

And soon, from the far west the elements'
rumbling

Increased and kept pace with Sir Alured's
grumbling,

Bright flashes between,

Blue, red, and green,

All livid and lurid began to be seen;

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

At length down it came—a whole deluge of rain,
A perfect Niagara, drenching the plain,

And up came the reek,

And down came the shriek,
Of the winds like a steam-whistle starting a
train;

And the tempest began so to roar and to pour,
That the Dennes and the Ingoldsbys, starting
at score,

As they did from the porch of St. Romwold's
church door,

Had scarce gain'd a mile, or a mere trifle more,
Ere the whole of the crew

Were completely wet through.

They dash'd o'er the downs, and they dash'd
through the vales,

They dash'd up the hills, and they dash'd down
the dales,

As if elderly Nick was himself at their tails;

The Bridegroom in vain

Attempts to restrain

The Bride's frightened palfrey by seizing the
rein,

When a flash and a crash

Which produced such a splash

That a Yankee had called it "an Almighty
Smash",

Came down so complete

At his own courser's feet,

That the rider, though famous for keeping his
seat,

From its kickings and plungings, now under,
now upper,

Slipp'd out of his demi-pique over the crupper,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

And fell from the back of his terrified cob
On what bards less refined than myself term
his "Nob".

(To obtain a *genteel* rhyme's sometimes a tough
job.)—

Just so—for the nonce to enliven my song
With a classical simile cannot be wrong—
Just so—in such roads and in similar weather,
Tydides and Nestor were riding together,
When, so says old Homer, the King of the Sky,
The great "Cloud-compeller", his lightnings
let fly,

And their horses both made such a desperate
shy

At this freak of old Zeus,
That at once they broke loose,
Reins, traces, bits, breechings were all of no use;
If the Pylian Sage, without any delay,
Had not whipp'd them sharp round and away
from the fray,
They'd have certainly upset his *cabriolet*,
And there'd been the—a name I won't men-
tion—to pay.

Well, the Knight in a moment recover'd his
seat,

Mr. Widdicombe's mode of performing that feat
At Astley's could not be more neat or complete,
—It's recorded, indeed, by an eminent pen
Of our own days, that this *our* great Widdi-
combe, then
In the heyday of life, had afforded some ten
Or twelve lessons in riding to Alured Denne,—

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

It is certain the Knight
Was so agile and light
That an instant sufficed him to set matters right,
Yet the Bride was by this time almost out of
sight;
For her palfrey, a rare bit of blood, who could
trace
Her descent from the "pure old Caucasian
race",
Sleek, slim, and bony, as
Mr. Sidonia's
Fine "Arab Steed"
Of the very same breed,
Which that elegant gentleman rode so genteelly
—See "Coningsby" written by "B. Disraeli"—
That palfrey, I say,
From this trifling delay
Had made what at sea's call'd "a great deal of
way".

"More fleet than the roe-buck" and free as
the wind,
She had left the good company rather behind;
They whipp'd and they spurr'd and they after
her press'd;
Still Sir Alured's steed was "by long chalks"
the best
Of the party, and very soon distanced the rest;
But long ere e'en he had the fugitive near'd,
She dash'd into the wood and at once dis-
appear'd!
It's a "fashious" affair when you're out on a
ride

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

—Ev'n supposing you're *not* in pursuit of a
bride,

If you are, it's more fashious, which can't be
denied,—

And you come to a place where three cross-
roads divide,

Without any way-post, stuck up by the side
Of the road to direct you and act as a guide,
With a road leading here, and a road leading
there,

And a road leading no one exactly knows where.

When Sir Alured came

In pursuit of the dame

To a fork of this kind,—a three-prong'd one—
small blame

To his scholarship if in selecting his way
His respect for the Classics now led him astray;
But the rule, in a work I won't stop to
describe, is

In medio semper tutissimus ibis,

So the Knight being forced of three paths to
enter one,

Dash'd, with these words on his lips, down the
centre one.

Up and down hill,

Up and down hill,

Through brake and o'er briar he gallops on still
Aye, banning, blaspheming, and cursing his fill
At his courser because he had given him a
“spill”;

Yet he did not gain ground

On the palfrey, the sound,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

On the contrary, made by the hoofs of the beast
Grew fainter and fainter,—and fainter,—and
—ceased!

Sir Alured burst through the dingle at last,
To a sort of a clearing, and there—he stuck
fast;

For his steed, though a freer one ne'er had
a shoe on,

Stood fix'd as the Governor's nag in “Don
Juan”,

Or much like the statue that stands, cast in
copper, a

Few yards south-east of the door of the Opera,
Save that Alured's horse had not got such a big
tail,

While Alured wanted the cock'd hat and pig-tail.

Before him is seen

A diminutive Green

Scoop'd out from the covert—a thick leafy
screen

Of wild foliage, trunks with broad branches
between

Encircle it wholly, all radiant and sheen,

For the weather at once appear'd clear and
serene,

And the sky up above was a bright mazarine,
Just as though no such thing as a tempest had
been,

In short it was one of those sweet little places
In Egypt and Araby known as “oases”.

There, under the shade

That was made by the glade,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

The astonished Sir Alured sat and survey'd
A little low building of Bethersden stone,
With ivy and parasite creepers o'ergrown,
 A *Sacellum*, or cell,
 In which Chronicles tell
Saints and anchorites erst were accustomed to
 dwell;
A little round arch, on which, deeply indented,
The zig-zaggy pattern by Saxons invented
Was cleverly chisell'd, and well represented,
 Surmounted a door,
 Some five feet by four,
It might have been less or it might have been
 more,
In the primitive ages they made these things
 lower
Than we do in buildings that had but one floor,
 And these Chronicles say
 When an anchorite grey
Wish'd to shut himself up and keep out of the
 way,
He was commonly wont in such low cells to stay,
And pray night and day on the *rez de chaussée*.

There, under the arch I've endeavoured to
 paint,
 With no little surprise,
 And scarce trusting his eyes,
The Knight now saw standing that little Boy
 Saint!
 The one whom before,
 He'd seen over the door
Of the Priory shaking his head as he swore—

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

With mitre, and crozier, and rochet, and stole
on,

The very self-same—or at least his Eidolon!
With a voice all unlike to the infantine squeak
You'd expect, that small Saint now address'd
him to speak;

In a bold, manly tone, he
Began, while his stony
Cold lips breath'd an odour quite *Eau-de-*
Cologne-y;

In fact, from his christening, according to
rumour, he
Beat Mr. Brummell to sticks, in perfumery.

“Sir Alured Denne!”

Said the Saint, “be atten-
-tive! Your ancestors, all most-respectable
men,
Have for some generations been vot'ries of mine,
They have bought me mould candles, and
bow'd at my shrine,
They have made my monks presents of ven'son
and wine,
With a right of free pasturage, too, for their
swine.

And, though you in this
Have been rather remiss,
Still I owe you a turn for the sake of ‘Lang
Syne’.
And I now come to tell you, your cursing and
swearing
Have reach'd to a pitch that is really past
bearing.

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

'T were a positive scandal
In even a Vandal,
It ne'er should be done, save with bell, book,
And candle:
And though I've now learn'd, as I've always
suspected,
Your own education's been somewhat neglected,
Still you're not such an uninform'd pagan, I
hope,
As not to know cursing belongs to the Pope!
And his Holiness feels, very properly, jealous
Of all such encroachments by paltry lay fellows.
Now, take my advice,
Saints never speak twice,
So take it at once, as I once for all give it;
Go home! you'll find there all as right as a
trivet,
But mind, and remember, if once you give way
To that shocking bad habit, I'm sorry to say,
I have heard you so sadly indulge in to-day,
As sure as you're born, on the very first trip
That you make—the first oath that proceeds
from your lip,
I'll soon make you rue it!
—I've said it—I'll do it!
'Forewarn'd is forearm'd', you shan't say but
you knew it;
Whate'er you hold dearest or nearest your heart,
I'LL TAKE IT AWAY, if I come in a cart!
I will, on my honour! you know it's absurd,
To suppose that a Saint ever forfeits his word
For a pitiful Knight, or to please any such man—
I've said it! I'll do't—if I don't, I'm a Dutch-
man!"—

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

He ceased—he was gone as he closed his
harangue,

And someone inside shut the door with a bang!

Sparkling with dew,

Each green herb anew

Its profusion of sweets round Sir Alured threw,

As pensive and thoughtful he slowly withdrew

(For the hoofs of his horse had got rid of their
glue),

And the cud of reflection continued to chew

Till the gables of Bonnington Hall rose in view.

Little reck'd he what he smelt, what he saw,

Brilliance of scenery,

Fragrance of greenery,

Fail'd in impressing his mental machinery;

Many an hour had elapsed, well I ween, ere he

Fairly was able distinction to draw

'Twixt the odour of garlic and *bouquet du Roi*.

Merrily, merrily sounds the horn,

And cheerily ring the bells;

For the race is run,

The goal is won,

The little lost mutton is happily found,

The Lady of Bonnington's safe and sound

In the Hall where her new Lord dwells!

Hard had they ridden, that company gay,

After fair Edith, away and away:

This had slipp'd back o'er his courser's rump,

That had gone over his ears with a plump,

But the lady herself had stuck on like a trump,

Till her panting steed

Relax'd her speed,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

And feeling, no doubt, as a gentleman feels
When he's once shown a bailiff a fair pair of
heels,
Stopp'd of herself, as it's very well known
Horses will do, when they're thoroughly blown,
And thus the whole group had foregather'd
again,
Just as the sunshine succeeded the rain.

Oh, now the joy, and the frolicking, rollicking
Doings indulged in by one and by all!
Gaiety seized on the most melancholic in
All the broad lands around Bonnington Hall.
All sorts of revelry,
All sorts of devilry,
All play at "High Jinks" and keep up the
ball.
Days, weeks, and months, it is really astonish-
ing,

When one's so happy, how Time flies away;
Meanwhile the Bridegroom requires no ad-
monishing,
As to what pass'd on his own wedding day;
Never since then,
Had Sir Alured Denne

Let a word fall from his lip or his pen
That began with a D, or left off with an N!

Once, and once only, when put in a rage,
By a careless young rascal he'd hired as a
Page,
All buttons and brass,
Who in handling a glass

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

Of spiced hippocras, throws
It all over his clothes,
And spoils his best pourpoint, and smartest
trunk hose,
While stretching his hand out to take it and
quaff it (he
'd given a rose noble a yard for the taffety),
Then, and then only, came into his head
A very sad word that began with a Z,
But he check'd his complaint,
He remember'd the Saint,
In the nick—Lady Denne was beginning to
faint—
That sight on his mouth acted quite as a bung,
Like Mahomet's coffin, the shocking word
hung
Half-way 'twixt the root and the tip of his
tongue.

Many a year
Of mirth and good cheer
Flew over their heads, to each other more dear
Every day, they were quoted by peasant and
peer
As the rarest examples of love ever known,
Since the days of *Le Chivaler D'Arbie* and
Joanne,
Who in Bonnington chancel lie sculptured in
stone.
Well—it happen'd at last,
After certain years past,
That an embassy came to our court from afar—
From the Grand-duke of Muscovy—now call'd
the Czar,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

And the Spindleshank'd Monarch, determined
to do

All the grace that he could to a Nobleman, who
Had sail'd all that way from a country which
few

In our England had heard of, and nobody
knew,

With a hat like a muff, and a beard like a Jew,
Our arsenals, buildings, and dock-yards to
view,

And to say how desirous

His Prince Wladimirus
Had long been with mutual regard to inspire

us;
And how he regretted he was not much nigher

us,

With other fine things,

Such as Kings say to Kings,

When each tries to humbug his dear Royal
Brother, in

Hopes by such "gammon" to take one another
in—

King Longshanks, I say,
Being now on his way

Bound for France, where the rebels had kept
him at bay,

Was living in clover

At this time at Dover

I' the castle there, waiting a tide to go over.

He had summon'd, I can't tell you, how many
men,

Knights, nobles, and squires to the wars of
Guienne,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

And among these of course was Sir Alured
Denne,
Who, acting like most
Of the knights in the host,
Whose residence was not too far from the
coast,
Had brought his wife with him, delaying their
parting,
Fond souls, till the very last moment of starting.
Of course, with such lots of lords, ladies, and
knights,
In their *Saracenettes*, and their bright chain-
mail tights,
All accustom'd to galas, grand doings, and
sights,
A matter like this was at once put to rights;
'T would have been a strange thing,
If so polish'd a king,
With his Board of Green Cloth, and Lord
Steward's department,
Couldn't teach an Ambassador what the word
"smart" meant.
A banquet was order'd at once for a score,
Or more, of the *corps* that had just come on
shore,
And the King, though he thought it "a bit of
a bore",
Ask'd all the *élite*
Of his *levée* to meet
The illustrious Strangers, and share in the
treat;
For the Boyar himself, the Queen graciously
made him her
Beau for the day, from respect to Duke Wladimir.

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

(Queer as this name may appear in the spelling,
You won't find it trouble you,
Sound but the Word of God,
Like the first L in Llan, Lloyd, and Llewellyn !)

Fancy the fuss and the fidgety looks,
Of Robert de Burghersh, the constables, cooks;
For of course the *cuisine*
Of the King and the Queen
Was behind them at London, or Windsor, or
Sheene,
Or wherever the Court ere it started had been,
And it's really no jest,
When a troublesome guest
Looks in at a time when you're busy and
prest,
Just going to fight, or to ride, or to rest,
And expects a good lunch when you've none
ready drest.

The servants, no doubt,
Were much put to the rout
By this very *extempore* sort of set out,
But they wisely fell back upon Poor Richard's
plan,

“When you can't what you would, you must
do what you can!”

So they ransack'd the country, folds, pig-styes,
and pens,
For the sheep and the porkers, the cocks and
the hens;

'Twas said a Tom-cat of Sir Alured Denne's,
A fine tabby-gray,
Disappear'd on that day,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

And whatever became of him no one could
say;

They brought all the food

That ever they cou'd,

Fish, flesh, and fowl, with sea-coal and dry
wood,

To his Majesty's *Dapifer*, Eudo (or Ude),

They lighted the town up, sat ringing the
bells,

And borrow'd the waiters from all the hotels.

A bright thought, moreover, came into the
head.

Of *Dapifer* Eudo, who 'd some little dread,

As he said, for the thorough success of his
spread.

So he said to himself, "What a thing it would
be

Could I have here with me

Some one two or three

Of their outlandish scullions from over the sea!

It's a hundred to one if the *Suite* or their Chief
Understand our plum-puddings, and barons of
beef;

But with five minutes' chat with their cooks
or their valets

We'd soon dish up something to tickle their
palates!"

With this happy conceit for improving the
mess,

Pooh-poohing expense, he dispatch'd an ex-
press

In a waggon and four on the instant to Deal,

Who dash'd down the hill without locking the
wheel,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

And, by means which I guess but declined to
reveal,

Seduced from the Downs, where at anchor
their vessel rode,

Lumpoff Icywitz, serf to a former Count Nes-
selrode,

A cook of some fame,

Who invented the same

Cold pudding that still bears the family name.

This accomplish'd, the *Chef's* peace of mind
was restor'd,

And in due time a banquet was placed on the
board

"In the very best style", which implies, in a
word,

"All the dainties the season" (and king) "could
afford".

There were snipes, there were rails,

There were woodcocks and quails,

There were peacocks served up in their pride
(that is tails),

Fricandeau, fricassees,

Ducks and green peas,

Cotelettes à l'Indienne, and chops *à la Soubise*

(Which last you may call "onion sauce" if you
please),

There were barbecu'd pigs

Stuff'd with raisins and figs,

Omelettes and *haricots*, stews and *ragouts*,

And pork griskins, which Jews still refuse and
abuse.

Then the wines,—round the circle how swiftly
they went!

Canary, Sack, Malaga, Malvoisie, Tent;

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

Old Hock from the Rhine, wine remarkably
fine,
Of the Charlemagne vintage of seven: ninety-
nine,—
Five cent'ries in bottle had made it divine!
The rich juice of Rousillon, Gascoygne, Bór-
deaux,
Marasquin, Curaçoa,
Kirschen Wasser, Noyeau,
And gin which the company voted "No Go";
The guests all hob-nobbing,
And bowing and bobbing;
Some prefer white wine, while others more
value red,
Few, a choice few,
Of more orthodox *goût*,
Stick to "old crusted port", among whom was
Sir Alured;
Never indeed at a banquet before
Had that gallant commander enjoy'd himself
more.
Then came "sweets"—served in silver were
tartlets and pies—in glass,
Jellies composed of punch, calves' feet, and
isinglass,
Creams, and whipt-syllabubs, some hot, some
cool,
Blancmange, and quince-custards, and goose-
berry fool.
And now from the good taste which reigns,
it's confest,
In a gentleman's, that is an Englishman's,
breast,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

And makes him polite to a stranger and guest,
They soon play'd the deuce
With a large *Charlotte Russe*;
More than one of the party dispatch'd his
plate twice
With "I'm really ashamed, but—another small
slice!

Your dishes from Russia are really *so nice*!"
Then the prime dish of all! "There was
nothing so good in
The whole of the Feed",
One and all were agreed,
"As the great Lumpoff Icywitz' Nesselrode
pudding!"

Sir Alured Denne, who'd all day, to say sooth,
Like Iago, been "plagued with a sad raging
tooth",
Which had nevertheless interfered very little
With his—what for my rhyme I'm obliged to
spell—vittle,
Requested a friend
Who sat near him to send

Him a spoonful of what he heard all so com-
mend,
And begg'd to take wine with him afterwards,
grateful

Because for a spoonful he'd sent him a plateful.
Having emptied his glass—he ne'er balk'd or
spill'd it—
The gallant Knight open'd his mouth—and
then fill'd it.

You must really excuse me—there's nothing
could bribe
Me at all to go on and attempt to describe

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

The fearsome look then
Of Sir Alured Denne!
—Astonishment, horror, distraction of mind,
Rage, misery, fear, and iced pudding—com-
bined!
Lip, forehead, and cheek—how these mingle
and meet—
All colours, all hues, now advance, now retreat,
Now pale as a turnip, now crimson as beet!
How he grasps his arm-chair in attempting to
rise,
See his veins how they swell! mark the roll of
his eyes!
Now east and now west, now north and now
south,
Till at once he contrives to eject from his
mouth
That vile “spoonful”—what
He has got he knows not,
He isn't quite sure if it's cold or it's hot;
At last he exclaims, as he starts from his seat,
“A SNOWBALL by——!” what I decline to re-
peat,—
'Twas the name of a bad place, for mention
unmeet.
Then oh what a volley!—a great many heard
What flow'd from his lips, and 't were really
absurd
To suppose that each man was not shock'd by
each word;
A great many heard, too, with mix'd fear and
wonder
The terrible crash of the terrible thunder,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

That broke as if bursting the building asunder;
But very few heard, although every one might,
The short, half-stifled shriek from the chair on
the right,
Where the lady of Bonnington sat by her
Knight;
And very few saw—some—the number was
small,
In the large ogive window that lighted the
hall,
A small stony Saint in a small stony pall,
With a small stony mitre, and small stony
crosier,
And small stony toes that owed nought to the
hosier,
Becken stonily downward to *some one* below,
As Merryman says, “for to come for to go!”
While every one smelt a delicious perfume
That seem’d to pervade every part of the room!
Fair Edith Denne,
The *bonne et belle* then,
Never again was beheld among men!
But there was the *fauteuil* on which she was
placed,
And there was the girdle that graced her small
waist,
And there was her stomacher brilliant with
gems,
And the mantle she wore, edged with lace at
the hems,
Her rich brocade gown sat upright in its place,
And her wimple was there—but where—WHERE
WAS HER FACE?

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

'T was gone with her body—and nobody
 knows,
Nor could any one present so much as suppose
How that Lady contrived to slip out of her
 clothes!
But 't was done—she was quite gone—the how
 and the where,
No mortal was ever yet found to declare;
Though enquiries were made, and some writers
 record
That Sir Alured offer'd a handsome reward.

King Edward went o'er to his wars in Guienne,
Taking with him his barons, his knights, and
 his men.

 You may look through the whole
 Of that King's muster-roll,
And you won't find the name of Sir Alured
 Denne:

But Chronicles tell that there formerly stood
A little old chapel in Bilsington wood;

 The remains to this day,
 Archæologists say,
May be seen, and I'd go there, and look if I
 could.

There long dwelt a hermit remarkably good,
 Who lived all alone,
 And never was known

To use bed or bolster, except the cold stone;
But would groan and would moan in so piteous
 a tone,

A wild Irishman's heart had responded "Och
 hone!"

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

As the fashion with hermits of old was to keep
skins
To wear with the wool on—most commonly
and sheep-skins—
He, too, like the rest, was accusom'd to do so;
His beard, as no barber came near him, too,
grew so,
He bore some resemblance to Robinson Crusoe,
In Houndsditch, I'm told, you'll sometimes
see a Jew so.

He lived on the roots,
And the cob-nuts and fruits,
Which the kind-hearted rustics, who rarely are
churls
In such matters, would send by their boys and
their girls;
They'd not get him to speak,
If they'd tried for a week,
But the colour would always mount up in his
cheek,
And he'd look like a dragon if ever he heard
His young friends use a naughty expression or
word.
How long he lived, or at what time he died,
'T were hard, after so many years, to decide,
But there's one point, on which all traditions
agree,
That he *did* die at last, leaving no legatee,
And his linen was marked with an A and a D.

Alas, for the glories of Bonnington Hall!
Alas, for its splendour! alas, for its fall!

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

Long years have gone by
Since the trav'ller might spy
Any decentish house in the parish at all.
For very soon after the awful event
I've related, 't was said through all that part of
Kent
That the maids of a morning, when putting
the chairs
And the tables to rights, would oft pop un-
awares
In one of the parlours, or galleries, or stairs,
On a tall, female figure, or find her, far hor-
rider,
Slowly o' nights promenading the corridor;
But whatever the hour, or wherever the place,
No one could ever get sight of her face!

Nor could they perceive
Any arm in her sleeve,
While her legs and her feet, too, seem'd mere
"make-believe",
For she glided along with that shadow-like
motion
Which gives one the notion
Of clouds on a zephyr, or ships on the ocean;
And though of her gown they could *hear* the
silk rustle,
They saw but that side on't *ornée* with the
bustle.
The servants, of course, though the house they
were born in,
Soon "wanted to better themselves", and gave
warning,

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

While even the new Knight grew tired of a
 guest
Who would not let himself or his family rest;
 So he pack'd up his all,
 And made a bare wall
Of each well-furnish'd room in his ancestors'
 Hall,
Then left the old Mansion to stand or to fall,
Having previously barr'd up the windows and
 gates,
To avoid paying sasses and taxes and rates,
And settled on one of his other estates,
Where he built a new mansion, and called it
 Denne Hill,
And there his descendants reside, I think, still.

Poor Bonnington, empty, or left, at the most,
To the joint occupation of rooks and a Ghost,
 Soon went to decay,
 And moulder'd away,
But whether it dropp'd down at last I can't
 say,
Or whether the jackdaws produced, by de-
 grees, a
Spontaneous combustion like that one at Pisa
 Some cent'ries ago,
 I'm sure I don't know,
But you can't find a vestige now ever so tiny,
“*Perierunt*”, as some one says, “*etiam ruina*.”

THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

MORAL

The first maxim a couple of lines may be said
in,
If you *are* in a passion, don't swear at a wedding!

Whenever you chance to be ask'd out to dine,
Be exceedingly cautious—don't take too much
wine!

In your eating remember one principal point,
Whatever you do, have your eye on the joint!
Keep clear of side dishes, don't meddle with
those

Which the servants in livery, or those in plain
clothes,

Poke over your shoulders and under your nose;
Or, if you *must* live on the fat of the land,
And feed on fine dishes you don't understand,
Buy a good book of cookery! I've a compact
one,

First-rate of the kind, just brought out by Miss
Acton,

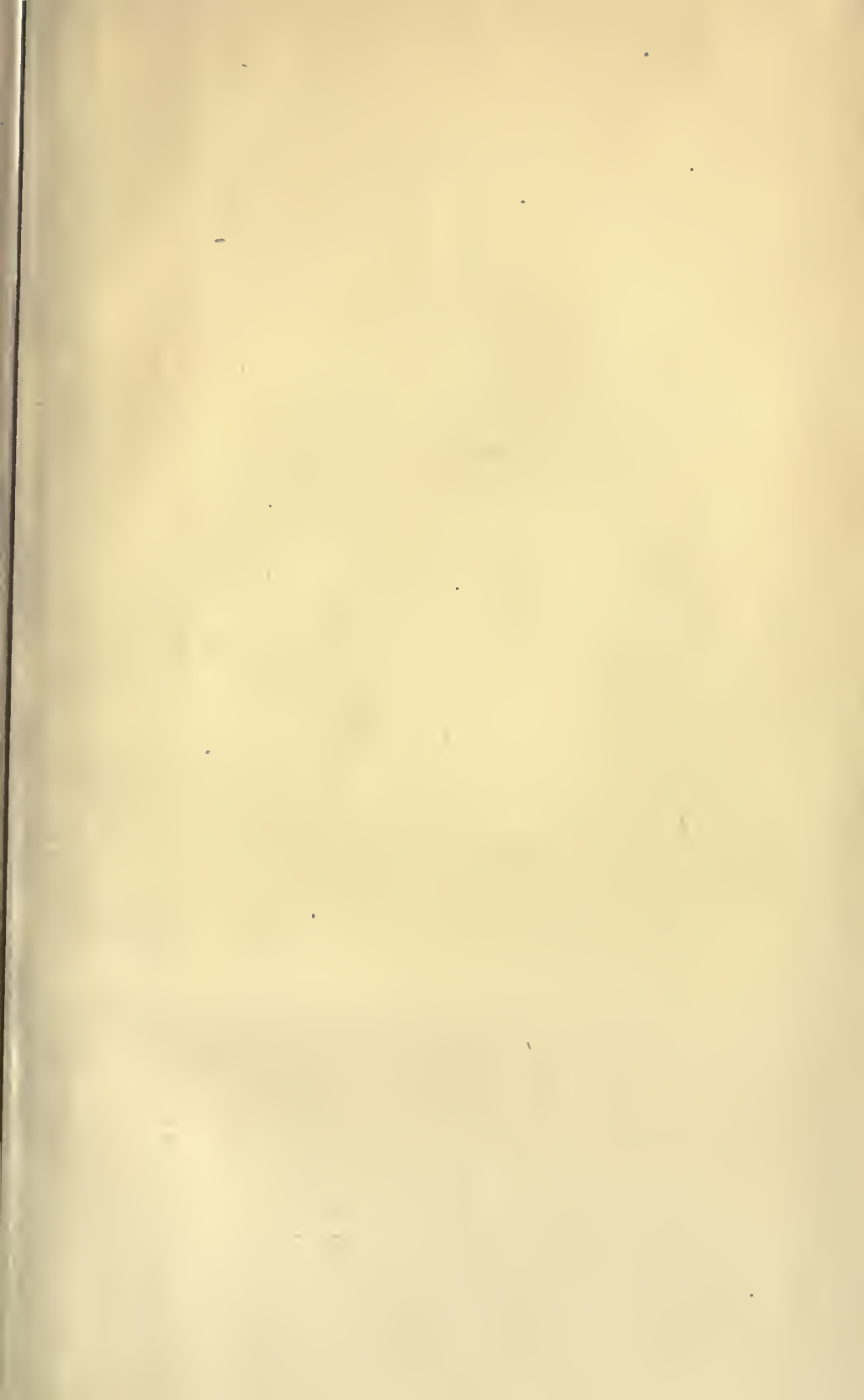
This will teach you their names, the ingredients they're made of,
And which to indulge in, and which be afraid of,
Or else, ten to one, between ice and cayenne,
You'll commit yourself some day, like Alured
Denne.

"To persons about to be married", I'd say,
Don't exhibit ill-humour, at least on The Day!
And should there perchance be a trifling delay

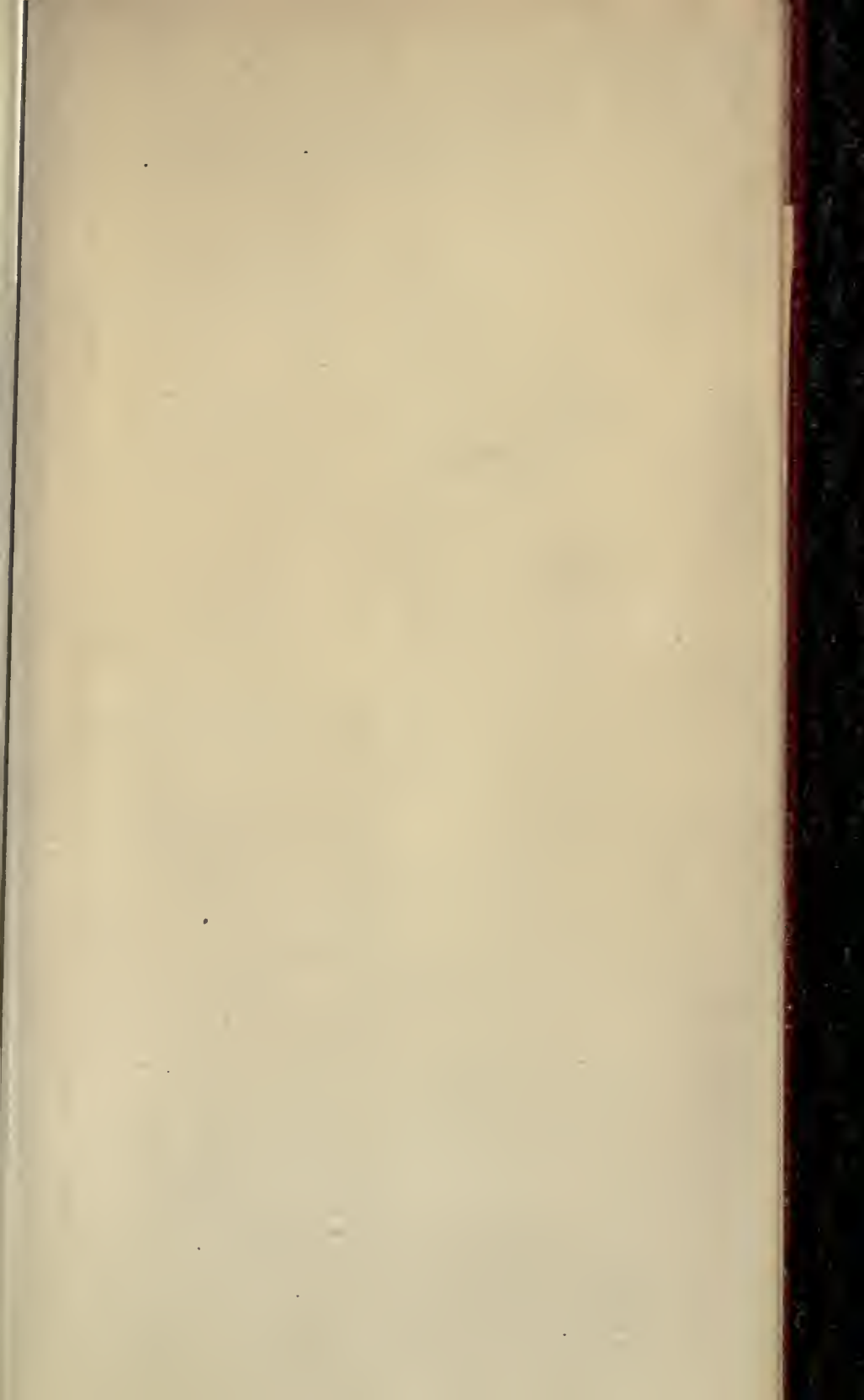
THE BLASPHEMER'S WARNING

On the part of officials, extend them your pardon,
And don't snub the parson, the clerk, or church-warden!

To married men this—For the rest of your
lives,
Think how your misconduct may act on your
wives!
Don't swear then before them, lest haply they
faint,
Or what sometimes occurs—run away with a
Saint!









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The Ingoldsby Legends

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